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COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

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I

IF I were asked to put forward an ethical principle which I considered to be especially certain, it would be that no one can be responsible, in the properly ethical sense, for the conduct of another. Responsibility belongs essentially to the individual. The implications of this principle are much more far-reaching than is evident at first, and reflection upon them may lead many to withdraw the assent which they might otherwise be very ready to accord to this view of responsibility. But if the difficulties do appear to be insurmountable, and that, very certainly, does not seem to me to be the case, then the proper procedure will be, not to revert to the barbarous notion of collective or group responsibility, but to give up altogether the view that we are accountable in any distinctively moral sense.

On this matter more will be said below. In the meantime I should like to insist that the belief in "individual," as against any form of "collective," responsibility is quite fundamental to our ordinary ethical attitudes. For if we believe that responsibility is literally shared, it becomes very hard to maintain that there are any properly moral distinctions to be drawn between one course of action and another. All will be equally good, or equally evil, as the case may be. For we shall be directly implicated in one another's actions, and the praise or blame for them must fall upon us all without discrimination. This, in fact, is what many persons do believe, and it is very hard to uphold any form of traditionalist theology on any other basis. Of late this has been very openly affirmed by noted theologians who, if they seem to do very great violence to common sense, have, at any rate, the courage and consistency to acknowledge the implications of their view, and do not seek to disguise them by half-hearted and

confused formulations. We have thus witnessed recently some very uncompromising affirmations of the belief in "universal sin" or the "collective guilt of man." This does not imply that there are no ethical distinctions of any kind which we may draw. Judgments may be passed upon the outward course of our conduct without prejudice to the view that guilt itself is "universal," and this is why Reinhold Niebuhr, whose influence on religious thinking today is very pronounced, is able to combine with his assertion of the doctrine of universal sin an account of the "relative moral achievements of history."[1] One action may be much more regrettable than another, it may be uglier in some ways, or it may do much more harm to our fellows, and thus we have "the less and more" of our day to day judgments, but where proper moral estimation is concerned there is not "a big sinner and a little sinner." We are all involved in the sins of all.

But this is not at all what we normally think. The distinction between what is outwardly right and the proper estimation of the worth of persons is not, one must admit, always very clearly drawn in our ordinary ethical thinking. And this is very frequently a source of great confusion. There is less excuse for this confusion today than in the past, since ethical writers have thrown the distinction in question into much prominence and stressed its extensive bearing on matters of practice. It has been shown, for example, that the facts of moral perplexity, and the diversities in our views about the problems of practice, admit of no reasonable explanation unless we allow that a person may do what is wrong in some outward sense without being morally to blame, and *vice versa.* For moral ignorance is not itself a moral defect. But while this shows that Niebuhr is perfectly justified in arguing that the "historical" judgments we pass on the effects of actions have little direct bearing on questions of properly moral worth, it gives no solid support to his view that there is "no less and more" where the latter are concerned. On the contrary, the more plainly we draw the distinction between the rightness of the act and the worth of the agent, the more will it also be evident that the main reason for stressing this distinction and the main consideration by which men may be induced to draw it, is that in *addition* to the distinctions we draw between the ethical qualities of actions in their "material" or outward aspect there are even more important distinctions to be drawn in respect of their moral value. We want to be sure that our estimation of moral worth is not prejudiced by considerations relating only to outward action, and it is the former that is usually uppermost in our ordinary ethical judgments. It seems therefore plain that, however prone we may be to confuse the two sorts of ethical judgments which have just been

[1] *The Nature and Destiny of Man,* p. 234.

distinguished, we normally have little doubt that some of our actions are better than others, not merely in their effects, or in some other "material" regard, but in themselves and morally. All our usual ethical thinking presupposes this. And if it is to be argued that, in respect to properly moral worth, there is nothing to choose between the lives of various individuals, then it must be made very plain that this is diametrically opposed to all that we normally think, to the attitudes we adopt from day to day, and to the main body of philosophical reflection on ethical questions; for the latter has been mainly concerned with the problem under what conditions may distinctions between the strictly moral qualities of conduct be drawn. If there are no such distinctions, if the questions we ask about them are without substance, then the greater part of ethical controversy has been a peculiarly vain pursuit of a will o' the wisp.

II

This may be affirmed without prejudice to the further question of whether it is possible in practice to form reliable estimates of one another's moral worth. Subject to certain limitations, it seems to me not impossible to assess the moral worth of another person's conduct and there appear to be some occasions where censure is in order, not merely as directed to outward conduct, or as a means of inducing reconsideration of the rightfulness of the course pursued, but as directed to the moral choice itself. But if this is denied, and if it is also held that the difficulties attending the attempt to appraise one another's moral qualities rule out every prospect of success, it by no means follows that the distinctions themselves are suspect. We can know in a general way under what conditions moral censure is incurred without needing to determine how far those conditions apply in particular cases. There is nothing very disconcerting to ethical theory in having to admit, should that appear necessary, that we have no appreciable insight into the strictly moral struggles of other persons, even in the cases of our friends and acquaintances, or such understanding of the factors involved as would lead to reasonably certain conclusions. It may even be urged that the injunction of the Scriptures, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," holds without exception, and that it is none of our business to determine how any man fares in his inner moral life. For these are matters about which we may hold various opinions without seriously affecting the question whether there really *are* differences of value between different kinds of life. And what we need most to uphold is the reality of the moral distinctions themselves, not our ability to penetrate to the substance of them in particular cases.

Some comment may be added here on the reliability of the estimates we form of our own moral worth. Is fallibility in this regard also irrelevant to the question whether there really are moral qualities of conduct? This appears to me to be a most important question, but I will only venture here to make two observations. Firstly, the view which is commonly held, namely that we are usually wide of the mark in attempts to assess our own worth, seems to me very mistaken. To substantiate this in detail I should have to consider the main ways in which moral worth has been conceived. But it must suffice to note the two main alternatives. We may hold that moral distinctions depend mainly on our motives and characters, or we may relate them to some choice or free effort of will not determined by character. If we adopt the latter alternative it seems impossible that anyone should be in doubt about his own moral worth, for no one can really doubt whether he is making an effort to follow the course which his conscience requires. But if we adopt the former alternative there is room for deception of oneself in so far as we may be deluded about our own motives. But how far is such delusion possible, how far may a person persuade himself that he is contributing to a hospital from benevolent motives when he is really more concerned to ensure the esteem and gratitude of his fellows? It is often thought that we may be seriously mistaken about our motives in such cases, and that it is the business of the preacher and moral mentor to induce a deeper searching of heart and ensure a better understanding of our own characters. Literature seems to bear this out, but I am not sure that an alternative account of the facts usually adduced in this connection would not be possible if the matter were carefully investigated. But if this is denied, and if it is held that we can be widely astray in our understanding of the motives which move us to action, it seems to me that we have here a very formidable argument to advance against the first of the two main alternatives noted above, namely the view that moral worth qualifies character and motives. For, and here I come to my *second* observation, the nature of properly moral value seems to be such that it would be very strange to ascribe it to features of our conduct which we do not fully understand and bring within our control. To affirm that there can be serious delusion about our own moral attainments is thus in effect to cast very grave doubt on the validity of moral distinctions and the reality of moral responsibility.

The belief that we can be mistaken about our own moral worth owes its prevalence in no small measure to failure to distinguish effectively between questions about the "material" rightness of action and the question of the worth of the agent. In respect of the former we are indeed frequently subject to much error and perplexity, and persons of sensitive conscience have often incurred a great deal

of mental pain because the very proper concern which they have felt about the "rightness of their act" became the cause of misgiving also about their own moral worth. But when the issue is clearly confronted, and it is understood that unavoidable ignorance may not be imputed to the agent, it is hard to see how we can entertain doubts about our own culpability or blamelessness in respect to conduct sufficiently recent for us to retain a clear impression of the way we responded to what seemed to be a duty. Nor is our own impression in matters of this sort easily dimmed in the course of time.

It is in respect to other persons that appraisement of moral worth is difficult. For the factors involved are not easily accessible to the outside observer. But there is no cause for misgiving here. For even if we never knew how others fared, our assurance that their actions, like our own, are subject to moral distinctions, would not be a whit affected. But if we surrender the view that there are such distinctions, and substitute for it the notion of some uniform moral quality pervading the whole of humanity, or even the whole of a particular group, we are left with nothing which we can recognize as our workaday ethical ideas; morality has suffered a complete transformation. We seem in fact to have, not morality at all, but the repudiation of it.

III

How, then, does this come about? Partly as a result of confusions which affect our ideas about value in general. We hypostatize abstractions and make them the bearers of value, forgetting that linguistic devices which make for succinctness of expression or poetic and rhetorical effect are not to be divested of their metaphorical and elliptical meanings, and taken as literal truth. We speak for example of sharing in the greatness of a nation, or we take pride in belonging to a musical or scholarly family even where we have no conspicuous claims to distinction in those regards ourselves. No objection can be taken to this provided we are clear what we are about. For the excellence generally attained by members of our nation or family warrants the presumption that we ourselves, having been subjected to the same influences, are not without a measure of the qualities for which others of our group are noted. The achievements of a relative, and especially of a son or daughter, may again reflect credit upon us, even when we have no part in what they have actually accomplished, to the extent that their success may be attributed to the devotion and discernment with which we have furthered their efforts. There is also the presumption that close association with persons of outstanding parts will have developed

our own propensities, especially where general qualities of character are concerned. Men take legitimate pride in this way in their association with the great, or in erstwhile membership of a famous school or college. Our interest in those with whom we have special ties of affection will also enable us to follow their success with a glow of satisfaction as if it were our own. In these, and other ways, we participate in the excellence of others. But this does not mean that we can ever take credit directly for what others have become or accomplished. The worthwhileness of music does not become mine by my being the brother or parent of a gifted musican if I have no ear for music myself. What we are or achieve is affected by our relations to others, and we are emotionally involved in their lives, but what worth our actions and experiences have depends directly on their own nature. So that although we may be proud or ashamed of others, we add not a cubit to our stature; neither do we shrink, through our association with them except in the measure that we ourselves change under their influence.

This holds of all values. But it is peculiarly evident in the case of moral value. For failure may here be brought home to the individual in a very special way in blame and remorse. And this brings us to a further way in which men are apt to lose sight of the dependence of moral value on the individual.

IV

This turns on the definition of responsibility. The etymology of this word suggests that it means "liability to answer," this being, of course, liability to answer to a charge, with the implication that if the answer is not satisfactory a penalty will be incurred. This is certainly the meaning of responsibility in the legal sense, and there can be little doubt that the original meaning of the word must be sought along similar lines, for men have not always distinguished clearly between law and morality—in primitive life both are merged in communal custom. But we do distinguish sharply between them today. It is possible to be legally guilty and morally innocent, and *vice versa.* The question arises, therefore, whether the legal meaning of responsibility provides any analogy to the meaning of the term in the ethical sense. I do not think that it does. It would, no doubt, be easy to point to sanctions which societies impose on their members outside the sphere of State enactment, some of them, for example certain kinds of ostracism, taking very subtle forms, and there are also penalties which individuals are apt to impose on themselves, as recent psychology has shown so well. But these may also be out of accord with ethical requirements. No enactment is morally fool-

proof. A man may thus be morally guilty in respect of conduct to which no sort of penalty attaches. And this only helps to bring out in an indirect way what is in fact equally evident in cases where legal or quasi-legal requirements coincide with the moral law, namely that the mere fact of our liability to suffer a penalty is far too incidental a feature of conduct to constitute moral responsibility. Even if we hold, as do the advocates of the retributive theory of punishment, that wickedness calls for infliction of pain on the guilty agent, this is something *further* which we affirm about moral evil and responsibility, and not the essence of them. Such punishment presupposes the evil to which it is appropriate. We may thus reject the retributive theory of punishment, as I would certainly do, without impugning the validity of moral distinctions. What, then, does responsibility mean? It means simply to be a moral agent, and this means to be an agent capable of acting rightly or wrongly in the sense in which such conduct is immediately morally good or morally bad, as the case may be. But what do we mean by rightness, moral worth, and their correlatives? To this no answer is possible. For here we are dealing with ultimate ethical conceptions not reducible to natural fact. And the sum of this is that responsibility is an ethical conception not to be defined by reference to ideas which are not themselves distinctively ethical. It cannot therefore be conceived in naturalistic terms such as a threat of punishment and our liability to suffer it. But if we overlook this, and come to conceive of moral responsibility in ways not substantially different from our accountability before the law of our State, then it is easy to see how we come also to hold that there are some occasions, at any rate, when we share our responsibility with others and are immediately implicated in their wrongdoing.

This happens in the following way. Normally, the purpose served by the imposition of penalties require the penalties to be inflicted on persons presumed to have offended, and on no others. For if punishment were meted out without discrimination, its deterrent effect would be substantially lessened and, for the most part, reversed. For punishment would then have to be regarded as sheer injury or as "an act of God" unrelated to our own volitions, and, while thus little able to hinder crimes, it would often provoke them. But there are, however, exceptional cases where expediency requires proceedings to be taken against a group as if it were an individual entity. No account will then be taken of the guilt or innocence of individual members of the group. It is in this way that a teacher punishes a class of unruly children when he is not able to discover the real offenders, or when a meticulous apportionment of blame is not practicable. Such procedure may have effect in two ways, either (a) by directly deterring the main offenders or (b) by inducing the

class to deal with them in ways not feasible for the teacher himself. The less recourse is had to such measures the better, both from the point of view of effective discipline and from regard to the ill-effects of a lingering sense of injustice. But there may also be some compensating factors, such as a deepening of the sense of community, which we might profitably investigate if we were concerned with educational problems or the general question of punishment. Suffice it for the present to note that, as a device for the achievement of practical ends, we have sometimes to accept collective responsibility. This is fully acknowledged in law, where a parent may in some respects be held to account for the conduct of children, or where a society or corporation may be proceeded against as a single entity or person. Extending our canvas still wider, we have the imposition of sanctions against a whole nation in the interest of international order, although it is plain that this involves quite as much suffering for the innocent as for the guilty, the former, in a case of this sort, being probably in a very great majority. Reparations and similar measures adopted against an aggressor among nations may also be mentioned here. Such measures may be needed both in the interest of immediate discipline, and as a part of political education, and they may provide means of redress to victims of aggression. But they will involve a great deal of suffering for persons who could not, by any streak of imagination, be held accountable for the culpable acts of the nation, most obviously in the case of infants and babes unborn. Something of this nature is, in fact, unavoidable in most forms of punishment and presents us with some of its most formidable problems. Locke, in consistency with his individualism, tried to show[1] that it could be avoided. He urged that, while the participants in an unjust war could fairly be punished with death, there should be no interference with their property, for that would involve a loss to their wives and dependents. But apart from the well-nigh impossible question of apportioning guilt for participation in an unjust war, once the leaders and authors of atrocities have been reckoned with (and that in itself is a notoriously complicated matter), it is obvious that a man's family may be much more seriously affected, even at the economic level, to say nothing of the deeper personal loss, by the death of a parent or husband than by confiscation of property. Punishment is therefore very likely, in most cases, to fall, in some measure, on the innocent as well as the guilty. But this unfortunate feature of punishment, and the fact that punishment has, in some instances, such as those mentioned above, to be deliberately inflicted, without discrimination, upon a whole group, serves only to show the limitations of the expedients by which society furthers its ends. Perfect justice is not attainable

[1] *Of Civil Government*, Part II, Section 182.

in practice, and even if measures which we normally consider expedient and just, in spite of their involving the innocent in the fate of the guilty, prove more easily avoidable than we are usually disposed to think, there will always be some intermingling of justice with injustice in human relations under any conditions we can anticipate. But what does this prove? Does it prove that the innocent share in the wickedness of the guilty, that the former are morally answerable for the ill deeds of the latter? Surely not. The question needs only to be stated plainly for us to see how foolish it is to allow our view of *moral* responsibility to be affected by imperfections in the ways in which members of society must deal with one another. And yet that is precisely what happens in a great many writings on ethics and jurisprudence, where the ideas of social and collective responsibility are put forward as properly ethical notions under cover of a false analogy with social enactments such as the enforcement of law.

An excellent instance of this may be found in two papers[1] by Professor Gomperz where the writer comes very frankly to the defence of the idea of collective responsibility along the lines just described. But Gomperz is only bringing out what is implicit in most accounts of responsibility in recent times. From Bradley's celebrated chapter on "The Vulgar Notion of Responsibility" in *Ethical Studies* to the symposium on the problem of responsibility at a recent "Joint Session of the Mind and Aristotelian Societies,"[2] by far the most predominant tendency is to define responsibility in terms of a "liability to answer" and to incur blame or punishment. This is how Bradley, like Rashdall, and other thinkers, is able to reconcile responsibility with determinism. For blame and punishment would have significance even if our conduct could not be other than it is in the last resort, provided it conformed to certain other conditions. And in the symposium to which I have referred, while the first and second contributors eschew an unambiguously naturalistic theory of ethics, they both pass easily from the view that a man is responsible because "he can be called upon to answer" (the second writer adding, "by incurring blame or moral disapproval"[3]—a view which, even if it avoids being naturalistic, reverses the proper relation of blame and responsibility, for the latter is prior to the former—) to cases where one person takes responsibility for the action of another, in Mr. Falk's example[4] the case of a Prime Minister taking responsibility for the actions of his Chief of Staff by declaring

[1] "Some Simple Thoughts on Freedom and Responsibility" (*Philosophy*, January, 1937) and "Individual, Collective, and Social Responsibility" (*Ethics*, Vol. XLIX).

[2] *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XIX.*

[3] Op. cit., p. 249.

[4] Op. cit., p. 249.

his "readiness to take the blame." But this particular example serves to show very well on what a misleading course we are set when we conceive responsibility in the way described. For a Prime Minister can never be *morally* responsible for the act of a colleague, he simply cannot "take the blame" *morally*. It may be necessary for the conduct of a war, or for the normal functioning of Parliamentary government where, in our country at least, joint Cabinet responsibility seems to be established, for a minister to allow the action of another to be treated as if it were his own. But his willingness to share the blame in this sense, especially if he puts his own position and career in serious jeopardy, induces us to esteem him highly as a moral person even if it is also a reason for seeking to overthrow his administration. For his "implication" in the follies or misdeeds of his colleagues is not a moral one, but a requirement of certain governmental procedures, and his loyal acceptance of it, at personal inconvenience, redounds to his credit. It would, of course, be a different matter if he had encouraged or condoned the wrongful policy himself, or if he were sheltering a colleague for personal reasons or were retaining him against the interest of the public. He would then be morally responsible, but in respect of his own action. But to accept responsibility for others for practical purposes, to incur certain consequences for what another person has done, is one thing, to be morally accountable is another; and in this last regard we cannot answer for one another or share each other's guilt (or merit), for that would imply that we could become directly worse (or better) persons morally by what others elect to do—and that seems plainly preposterous.

V

The belief that guilt may be shared derives some plausibility also from the loose expressions which normally serve our turn when we need to refer to the contributions of several persons to a joint undertaking. Take a case of burglary. We have first the thieves who actually carried it out. One of these may be the prime mover, a confirmed criminal perhaps, another a novice pressed somewhat reluctantly to be his accomplice. The temptation may have been put in the way of these two, and the opportunity provided, by an acquaintance who bears the victim a grudge but takes no part in the actual robbery beyond supplying useful information. Yet another person may have covered the escape of the criminals or, by hindering the work of detection, have become an accessory after the fact. Finally, we may have a "receiver" who disposed of the stolen goods. Each of these persons is in some way implicated in the crime, and they may thus

be said to share the responsibility for it. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that we have here a single criminal operation the blame for which rests equally on all concerned. Even the law would discriminate sharply in such a case, imposing the heaviest penalty on the habitual criminal, but, in his own case as well as that of the others, reviewing the judgment in the light of extenuating circumstances, previous convictions etc. The instigator who provided the original inducement might easily escape the toils of the law altogether. But at the properly moral level many further factors must be taken into account, several of them, as has been stressed, not easily accessible to the outside observer. And in this reckoning many roles may be reversed, the instigator, possibly, proving the worst offender. What has to be stressed is that the guilt of each is strictly proportionate to his part in the joint undertaking. It is not one crime that we have but many.

This seems very evident in the simple case described. It is just as true, however, in respect to complicated matters, such as social and economic injustices, where the lure of vague collectivist explanations is stronger. Reformers have often reminded us that we need, not merely to hinder the criminal, but also to remove the causes of crime, and, in this connection, it is frequently maintained that society shares the guilt of the criminal. Gomperz instances the case of a poor woman who steals a loaf to feed her starving children, and he contends that society is really as responsible as the woman herself, in as much as society failed to provide for her needs. He even goes so far as to speak of blaming the social "structure." But that, it seems evident, is only meaningful in a figurative sense and as a rhetorical device when concern is to be aroused at distressful social conditions. If taken in the literal sense, as Gomperz appears to intend, it is very misleading. For "a structure" cannot be the bearer of moral responsibility; neither can "society in general," for these are both abstractions which we must be careful not to hypostatize. What should be said, if we are to speak exactly, is this. The guilt of the poor woman is lessened, if not eliminated altogether, by her circumstances. But she alone is to blame, if blame there is to be, for what she herself has done. Others are also to blame, but *for something else*, namely for their part in allowing her to remain in desperate need. But they are responsible for this as individuals, and strictly in proportion to what each might have done, directly or indirectly, to ameliorate her lot.

It has also to be emphasized here that there are severe limitations on the power of the individual to modify social conditions, for normally he can only do so by concerted action, and concerted action, moreover, which requires a consensus of opinion on highly complicated social and economic questions. It is thus very foolish simply to look

about us, as we are prone to do, and, having noted grave and persistent social ills, such as poverty, waste, unemployment, and war, straightway to take these as a measure of human wickedness. For ills of this sort, while they do in some ways reflect the moral life of a community, and provide the basis for *some* generalisations, can not be regarded as an indication of intentional evil until we have considered carefully just what could have been expected of the average individual when confronted with them. Allowance must be made for ignorance, for the need for leadership, and for the peculiar difficulties which attend the corporate effort required for effective social reform. This does not imply that the individual must simply surrender to the drift of events, or acquiesce passively in the policies of a handful of leaders. There is much that he can do, but ultimate success will depend on a great many factors wholly outside his control, no less in a democratic than in a totalitarian country. And therefore we need to be careful not to form exaggerated conceptions of human depravity by looking, not to what could reasonably be expected of the individual, but to society as a corporate entity directly accountable for social and economic ills.

This has a close bearing on the problem of war guilt. This question, it should be stressed, is only one aspect of the general question of the treatment of aggressor nations. For many factors besides that of moral guilt enter into the latter problem. But so far as the properly moral issue is concerned, we do very serious damage to the prospect of eventual reconciliation if we allow a distorted conception of moral guilt to complicate questions which are already bewildering enough, the more especially as we shall not merely form a wrong estimate of the course we should pursue ourselves, but also encourage those pathological conditions to which vanquished peoples are prone, and which, however they may accord with our mood and the immediate requirements of a situation, are certain, if only by being an unhealthy condition unrelated to any rational assurance, to emerge at a later date in ways very little amenable to rational control—whatever the precise direction they take. What we need to ask, in the case, for example, of Germany, is not what is the record of Germany as a nation in the inter-war period or later—or our own record for the matter of that—but just what could have been expected of the average German citizen in the swirling tide of the events which engulfed him and others eventually in the deep vortex of war. This is not to suggest that he was helpless and must be exonerated altogether, and that questions of guilt concern only those who were in positions of power and authority. There were undoubtedly many things which the ordinary citizen might have done, and I can only leave it here for the historian in due course to attempt to determine what they were. But allowance must clearly

be made for tradition, outlook, and environment, for the difficulty of anticipating the course of events (and it is easy for us afterwards, and from outside, to be wise about these), for the very limited influence which the individual, even if he is of a heroic mould, can normally have on the policies of a ruthless totalitarian government, and for the determined opposition to warlike and despotic measures which a certain proportion, at any rate, of the German people showed. Let us seek, by all means, to extend the influence of democratic principles which will enable the individual to give of his best to his State. But in the meantime, let us be fair to him, wherever he is found, by relating the question of guilt, not to some abstract entity in which he and all other individuals are merged, but to what we can reasonably estimate could have been expected of the individual, who is the sole bearer of guilt and merit, in the particular situation confronting him.

I should like to stress again what has already been noted, that no one is morally guilty except in relation to some conduct which he himself considered to be wrong. This seems plain enough in our ordinary encounter with one another from day to day, for circumstances force it more sharply upon us in close and immediate relationships. But it needs to be borne in mind very carefully when we are seeking to form ethical judgments about a vast concourse of people with whom individual and personal ties are slight. Otherwise we shall be inclined to arraign other peoples for follies and misunderstandings which, whatever the measures they may warrant in practice, are, I repeat, no direct indication of *moral* culpability. Again I do not imply that "to understand all is to excuse all." But I insist that we must first understand, and then we can have some indication of guilt. But to understand is very much harder, it calls for more wisdom and patience, when dealing with men in the mass than when we have to do with individuals in relative isolation, the more especially as the normal working of our imagination presents us with a simplified picture in which the nation or group is personified, and, having been given a mind and will of its own, is set to act on a stage very much simpler than the actual stage of history.

We are most prone to these false simplifications of complicated issues in times of confusion and change such as the present. For in such times there is apt to be a recrudescence of primitive ethical attitudes, as the recent history of Europe shows so well. And primitive peoples pay little heed to the individual; the unit is for them the tribe or the family. But reflection upon the affinity between the doctrine of collective responsibility and the undiscriminating "ethic of the tribe" should go a long way to discredit the former.

Failure to take due account of these matters will not only distort

our vision in this or that particular regard, and poison our relationships. It will also give us in general an utterly misleading picture of man and "the human situation." Of this there is ample evidence already in the prevailing fashion of gloomy denunciation of all human endeavour, an indulgence which may show itself before long to be a more serious business than we are inclined to realise. Its immediate progeny are despair and its twin, irresponsibility. But worse may follow.

VI

How far these reactionary estimates of human activity owe their persistence to mistaken philosophical views is not easy to determine. But they have obviously derived much support from "organic" theories of society, such as the celebrated Idealist Theory of the State and the cruder forms of totalitarian theories which prevail today. These latter have not yet taken very deep root in democratic countries, and although the idealist doctrines, whose authoritarian aspect was, incidentally, qualified in important ways, were in the ascendancy towards the close of the nineteenth century in Western thought, they do not accord well with the main tendencies in European culture and civilization, much less with the temper and traditions of the British people. They have been very extensively discredited today so far as philosophical thought is concerned. It is therefore well to remind ourselves that the ideas of a pervasive communal guilt and of collective responsibility are simply the obverse of the tendency to set some abstract good of the community above the wellbeing of its individual members, a tendency whose natural terminus is the ruthless oppression and totalitarianism against which our face is so resolutely set in democratic countries. Most of the arguments which have recently been used so effectively to demolish the ideas of "a common good" and a "general will," as those terms are usually understood in philosophy, hold with undiminished force, *mutatis mutandis*, against any theory of communal guilt.

The advocates of collectivist theories of society, whether they be theories of human good or of human evil, are apt to hold their opponents in contempt on the score of an alleged individualism. But this is very largely a case of hitting at random, and making play with the meaning of a highly ambiguous word. Individualism may mean several things. It may mean that the good which human beings ought to pursue is always a private one, or it may mean, again, that individuals have unlimited and inalienable rights, this latter being, I think, its main meaning in Western philosophy, or it may indicate the general failure to appreciate the dependence of

the individual on his social environment. In all these meanings the term stands for mistaken theories, and theories which have also, unfortunately, wrought very serious havoc in our thought and practice in the past, and which continue at the present time to obstruct very necessary positive reforms. But individualism in these reprehensible senses, has no necessary connection with the view that the individual is the sole bearer of value. We may insist, and the need to do so is as great in many regards today as in the past, that no one can have proper interests of his own unless he has also interests in others, that we are "members of one another" even with regard to properly moral struggles in so far as the attainment or failure of one person is a matter of concern to his neighbours who are *to that extent* involved in his moral attainment or failure. No one lives in a vacuum, no one is, or should be, unaffected by the destinies of others. And where natural sympathies reach their limit, or where the welfare of one is opposed, as in many ways it may be, to the welfare of others, there yet remain our duties to further the wellbeing of others independently of any advantage to ourselves. Although no one is "responsible for" others in the sense that he is answerable for the conduct of others, we are all extensively "responsible for" our fellows in the sense that we have duties towards them—most of our duties are of this sort. But all this may be fully allowed without affecting the principle that value belongs to the individual and that it is the individual who is the sole bearer of moral responsibility. This principle is not individualistic in any way which is incompatible with a true estimate of our essential social relationships. It is not "atomic" in any objectionable sense.

"But," it may be argued, "what of the individual's dependence on his society; is not our conduct shaped by our environment?" My answer here is that anyone who holds that the individual is never free to choose his action in a way not determined by factors outside himself should surrender the idea of properly moral responsibility; the position cannot be saved by extending our responsibility to our environment, and the attempt to do so is an excellent *reductio ad absurdum* of the view that morality is compatible with determinism. To bring this out fully would require careful discussion of the uniqueness of moral value and of other matters which cannot be brought within the scope of this paper. It must suffice here to note that the doctrine of freedom as "self-determination" makes no substantial difference to the present issue. For the fact that determination is of a special kind, and involves a peculiar assimilation into the character of the agent of the forces which affect him, still leaves the determinist with the view that factors from outside ourselves have gone to the shaping of conduct. And if the notion of responsibility is to be retained at all in such a case, it is hard to see

how we can avoid extending it to these further factors[1], an embarrassment that does not arise in connection with non-moral values which do not carry with them the notion of guilt and a correlative merit. The determinist thus finds himself extending the blame for wrongful actions to our environment, and eventually to the whole of reality. There arises in this way the notion of a principle of evil in the universe at large; and this notion has a wide currency at the present time. It derives much support from uncritical accounts of the findings of recent psychology, and it also encourages capricious play with the mythologies of primitive religion. This also contributes to the dissemination of irrational and despondent estimates of human attainment. But it seems evident that the quietus to such reactionary tendencies cannot be finally given until moral philosophers turn with much greater resolution than at present to the much neglected problem of moral freedom. This is the crucial problem today for religion as well as for ethics and politics. But here again I am touching on matters which cannot be effectively brought within the compass of this paper. Neither has it been possible to comment on the more specifically religious aspects of the problem of collective guilt, although these are in many ways the most important.

[1] Sir David Ross, for example, argues that a person's "responsibility for acts is divided" because "other people by teaching and example, the writers of the books he has read, and so on, have all helped to mould his character into that form of which his action is the expression." *Foundations of Ethics*, p. 248.

EXISTENTIALISM

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To treat existentialism as *a* philosophy is no more possible than to treat idealism as *a* philosophy. The reason is obvious. Jean-Paul Sartre is an existentialist and Gabriel Marcel is also an existentialist; but the philosophy of Sartre is not the same as the philosophy of Marcel. One can no more speak of the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Marcel and Berdyaev, as though they maintained the same system, than one could speak of the philosophy of Plato, Berkeley and Hegel, as though one philosophy was common to the three thinkers. Of course, if one took idealism in the sense in which the Marxist uses the term, as meaning the doctrine that mind is prior to matter, i.e. as opposed to materialism (with the suggestion that realism and materialism are equivalent), one would have a definite theme to consider; but one would be forced to recognize as idealists thinkers who would never call themselves by that name and who would not be generally recognized as such. Similarly, if one said that existentialism is the doctrine that man is free and that what he makes of himself depends on himself, on his free choices, one would doubtless have mentioned a doctrine which is common to the existentialists and which they insist upon; but one would at the same time be forced to include in the ranks of the existentialists philosophers whose inclusion would be manifestly absurd. It is very difficult, then, to assign to existentialism any doctrinal content which would be common to all those who are generally recognized as existentialists, but which would at the same time be peculiar to them. M. Sartre has asserted that existentialism "is nothing else but an attempt to draw all the consequences from a consistent atheist position,"[2] while Berdyaev is reported to have exclaimed, "*L'existentialisme, c'est moi*!" But Berdyaev is no atheist, while Sartre is not Berdyaev: the positions are obviously incompatible. According to Sartre, that which all existentialists have in common is the fundamental doctrine that existence precedes essence;[3] but though this may be a doctrine common to all existentialists, it does not seem to be peculiar to them, if one regards its essential meaning. It means in effect that man has no given character which determines his actions, but that he is free, and while this doctrine would distinguish existentialism from all forms of determinism, it would not distinguish it from other philosophies which also deny determinism.

[1] This paper represents a lecture given at Oxford on May 23, 1947.

[2] *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*. p. 94.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

M. Sartre may say, and indeed does say, that his meaning is that man has no essence antecedently to his free choices, to the essence he creates freely; but since he is able to delimit man as the object of his existential analysis in such a way that chickens are excluded, it is difficult to take him altogether seriously or to suppose that the proposition, "existence precedes essence," amounts to much more than an emphatic assertion of liberty and an emphatic denial of any form of physical or psychological determinism. In the case of M. Sartre the proposition is certainly bound up with atheism, in the sense that he denies the existence of any archetypal idea or divine idea of man, which is realized or unfolded on the plane of created existence; but if the proposition is understood in a sense which would be acceptable not only to Sartre and Camus, but also to Marcel, it can hardly involve atheism, though it would involve the rejection of that determinism which seems to be implied by certain theistic systems, by that of Leibniz, for example.[1]

Nor does it seem that we can define existentialism in general in reference to what one might call "personal thinking." Kierkegaard was certainly a personal thinker, in the sense that he philosophized on the basis of his personal experience (a knowledge of his relations with his father and with Regina Olsen is by no means irrelevant to an understanding of his thought), and so far from attempting to construct an "objective system," he directed a great deal of his polemic precisely against "the System" and against "objectivity;" but one could hardly say the same of Heidegger, who sets out in *Sein und Zeit* to construct an ontology, to investigate the problem of being. In a letter to Jean Wahl, Heidegger protested that his philosophy was not *Existenzphilosophie,* that his investigation of human existence or of the being of human existence was but a preparatory stage to an examination of being in general, and that his philosophy should not be confused with that of Karl Jaspers who considers the concrete possibilities open to the human being, without aiming at the development of any general theoretical ontology. It is true that Jaspers has declared that it is the task of the philosopher to awaken man to the possibilities of choice and that existentialism as a general theory, is the death of the philosophy of existence; but he is much more of an observer, a philosopher of philosophies, than a personal thinker in the sense in which Kierkegaard was a personal thinker.

Nevertheless, even if it is difficult to find a doctrinal content which is common and at the same time peculiar to the existentialist philosophies, we all know that the word existentialism has objective reference and that it is not unreasonable to group together Kierke-

[1] Leibniz defended "liberty," it is true; but not all would recognize as liberty what he regarded as such.

gaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, Marcel, however great and however important the differences between their respective philosophies may be. I suppose that in the first place one can link them together by their common rejection, explicit or implicit, of all forms of "totalitarian" philosophy, using the word "totalitarian" not in its political sense (primarily at least), but as signifying any philosophy which minimizes the position and importance of the individual as the free, self-transcending subject and as the central datum of experience. One does not need to labour the point that Kierkegaard, for whom, owing to the circumstances of his university education, philosophy meant the Hegelian system, revolted against the Hegelian exaltation of the Idea or Absolute at the expense of the individual and against the Hegelian insistence on mediation and on the synthesis of opposites. The primary fact is the individual, and it is simply comical if the individual strives to strip himself of his individuality and to merge himself in the universal consciousness or cosmic reason. True philosophy is not objectivity, but it is the fruit of passionate interest; in other words, thinking is personal, not impersonal, and its value lies in its clarification of choice and its appeal to choose, the ultimate object of choice being the self in its relation to the Transcendent, to God. Similarly, Jaspers insists that the function of philosophy is not to teach a *Weltanschauung*, but to make clear to the individual the possibilities of choice and what authentic choice is. In the limiting situations, particularly in face of contingency and death, man recognizes the enveloping presence of the Transcendent; but the deciphering of its nature depends on an act of choice, and the study of the life and thought of men like Kierkegaard and Nietzsche serves to make clear the personal character of the choice of *Weltanschauung*. It might seem that Martin Heidegger constitutes an exception since, as already remarked, he sets out to develop an ontology; but in point of fact since he actually starts with man and ends with man, he falls into line with the other existentialists. Heidegger lays his emphasis on authentic choice, though for him this choice is really the choice of the self as the being doomed to death, *das Sein-zum-Tode*. As to Sartre, although he gives as the subtitle of *L'Être et le Néant Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, the emphasis is on man as *projet*, as the being which creates itself by free choice, as the possibility of its own transcendence, and this theme reappears in plays like *Les Mouches* and novels like *Les Chemins de la Liberté*. Although Sartre makes considerable use of Hegel in *L'Être et le Néant*, particularly in regard to the power of the negation, he is at one with the other existentialists in insisting on the individual. He declares that his starting-point is the subjectivity of the individual (and that for strictly philosophical reasons), and that the first and basic truth is the *Cogito, la verité absolue de la*

conscience s'atteignant elle-même.[1] For Camus, again, though he insists at length on the absurdity of the world and of human life (as in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe, L'Étranger, Le Malentendu, Caligula*), the real problem is how the individual is to conduct himself in an absurd world. Of Marcel's philosophical writing one can say that a great part of it is devoted to revealing to man what he is and what his spiritual activities, his truly human activities, imply.

Although it is not formally true of Heidegger, it is actually true of all the existentialists, therefore, including Heidegger, that they take man as the central theme of philosophy, and that by man they mean the free, self-creating, self-transcending subject. Looked at under this aspect existentialism may be regarded as a revolt against absolute idealism (at least so far as Kierkegaard is concerned, and the same is partly true, I believe, of Marcel) and as a revolt against positivism, materialistic determinism and psychological determinism, against any form of philosophy which would reduce man to an item in the physical cosmos, so far as this would imply determinism, and against any form of philosophy which excludes a consideration of man's inner life and destiny. (To assign as the central theme of philosophy man's inner creation of himself by his free choices is to turn one's back on logical analysis, for example, as a sufficient subject for the philosopher.) Again, existentialism, by insisting on the individual, on the free subject, is also a reaction against the tendency to resolve the individual into a number of functions, such as citizen, taxpayer, voter, worker, trade unionist, civil servant, etc. This theme is developed particularly by Gabriel Marcel. In other words, existentialism is the re-assertion of the free man against the totality or the collectivity or any tendency to depersonalization, and in this respect it is akin to personalism and pragmatism.

Before proceeding further it might be as well to anticipate an objection against the mode of treatment of existentialism adopted in this paper. I can well imagine a Marxist saying that existentialism is the philosophy of the dying bourgeoisie, the last convulsive effort of an outmoded individualism, and in point of fact M. Naville (though I do not think that the latter is a Marxist) suggested to M. Sartre that his philosophy was really a resurrection of radical-socialism adapted to present social conditions. *La crise sociale ne permet plus l'ancien libéralisme; elle exige un libéralisme torturé, angoissé.*[2] The Marxists have called M. Sartre the philosopher of the misfits, *l'écrivain des ratés*, and they wonder what the phenomenological analyses of *L'Être et le Néant* have to do with history. Moreover, many critics, whether Marxists or not, might be tempted to observe that it is a mistake to treat existentialism abstractly, that

[1] *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, pp. 63–64. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

one should treat it in relation to its historical and political circumstances, in relation, for example, to the fall and liberation of France and the ensuing social and political conditions, or even that one should treat it as a literary, and not as a philosophical phenomenon. However, while it is doubtless legitimate to treat a philosophical movement in relation to political and social circumstances, it is also legitimate, and in my opinion a good deal more relevant, to treat any philosophy which professes to be a philosophy as a philosophy, i.e. abstractly. Anyone who is prepared to allow the possibility of attaining philosophical truth must admit this. Moreover, the consideration of political and social conditions is more relevant to explaining the popularity and vogue of a philosophy than to settling the question of its truth or falsity. Existentialism cannot be explained simply in terms of the last war, if for no other reason than that Marcel was writing long before the war began, while Sartre published *La Nausée* in 1938; but it may very well be that recent and present conditions in France help to explain the vogue of existentialism, the interest it has aroused. It would certainly be absurd to exclude the social and political approach as altogether illegitimate; but if one is entitled to treat dialectical materialism as a philosophy and not simply as the transient expression of passing historical circumstances, one is also entitled to consider the thought of M. Sartre from the point of view of its truth or falsity rather than as affecting or not affecting the welfare of the proletariat. As to the literary approach, I would remark that the use of the drama and the novel by Sartre, Camus and Marcel certainly helps to explain the wide interest taken in existentialism; but the significance of those plays and novels for the philosopher consists in their philosophical import, and any student of Sartre is aware that his popular productions can be properly understood only in the light of his general philosophy.[1]

To return, then, to my abstract treatment of existentialism. It seems to me that the existentialist starting-point, man as free subject, is a legitimate starting-point, considerably more legitimate than some principle which is postulated as ultimate, though its existence cannot be known *a priori* and though to presuppose it is to presuppose a whole philosophy. The excuse for starting with an ultimate and presupposed ontological principle is that if the philosophy built on it or deduced from it constitutes a complete and coherent account of reality, its justification is evident. But apart from the fact that this seems to involve a further presupposition concerning the character of reality and the power of the human mind, the history of philosophy appears to show that facts of ex-

[1] In the case of Gabriel Marcel special consideration should indeed be given to his idea of the relation of drama to philosophy; but I cannot embark on that subject here.

perience are not infrequently distorted or slurred over in order to fit in with the preconceived principle, and not the least important of these facts is precisely the human consciousness of personal freedom. It may be objected that the existentialist presupposes freedom, whereas it ought to be demonstrated; but in view of the initial consciousness of freedom, it is the determinist, not the maintainer of freedom, who should be called upon to demonstrate his position. M. Sartre deals with certain determinist arguments in *L'Être et le Néant*, the argument, for example, that motives determine conduct, and he attempts to show that a conscious being must be free, that the *pour-soi*, as opposed to the *en-soi*, must be free owing to its ontological structure, that it does not simply possess liberty, but is its liberty[1]—does not Orestes say in *Les Mouches*, "I *am* my liberty?"—but in any case he evidently thinks that liberty is a datum of immediate experience and that the determinists are trying to evade the recognition of a truth of which they are, to some extent at least, inevitably aware; they are in *mauvaise foi*, they are *les lâches*.

Secondly, I think that it is to the credit of Heidegger and Sartre that in their insistence on the free ego they do not at the same time create the Cartesian gulf between the ego's self-consciousness and its knowledge of the world and of other selves. Their datum is not the self-enclosed consciousness, but the self in the world. *Dasein* or *la realité humaine* comes to know itself in and through its experience of the *milieu* and of other persons, and to separate off the consciousness of the ego from the original total experience, in such a way that it becomes necessary to prove the existence of extramental objects and of other selves, is, they recognize, to create an artificial problem which is hardly capable of a satisfactory solution, since the premisses are themselves unsatisfactory. *Par le je pense, contrairement à la philosophie de Descartes, contrairement à la philosophie de Kant, nous nous atteignons nous-mêmes en face de l'autre, et l'autre est aussi certain pour nous que nous-mêmes.*[2] Whatever one may think of M. Sartre's protracted discussion of our knowledge of other selves and the phenomenon of *le regard*,[3] it is a matter for rejoicing that he does not allow his insistence on the *Cogito* to blind him to the artificiality of Descartes' procedure. If the free self in M. Sartre's philosophy tends to be a closed self, this is due, not to any adoption of the Cartesian gulf between the self-enclosed consciousness and the external world, but rather to the fact that he tends to concentrate on those activities which turn the person into a thing and which render impossible true personal relations, those activities which

[1] Cf. *L'Être et le Néant*, pp. 508 ff.
[2] *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, p. 66.
[3] *L'Être et le Néant*, Part 3, Chap. I, *L'Existence d'Autrui*.

belong to the sphere of what Marcel calls *Avoir*, as distinct from the sphere of *Être*. Marcel, who also avoids the Cartesian gulf by his insistence on the primary fact of *incarnation*, embodiment, concentrates on those spiritual activities of man, such as love and fidelity and hope, which involve the relationship of person to person, thus revealing the self-transcending subject or self as essentially "open," not as self-enclosed.

The starting-point of existentialism may, therefore, be called a realist starting-point; M. Sartre insists that knowledge is always knowledge of something and consciousness always consciousness of something; neither knowledge nor consciousness creates its object. The world is the object of knowledge and is not created by the knower in regard to its being. The world is phenomenal in the sense that what we mean by the world is that which appears; but it does not follow that we can reduce the being of phenomena to *percipi*. If the being of phenomena consisted in *percipi*, the percipient would exist outside himself, since to perceive is to perceive something and this implies a distinction between subject and object. One can speak, therefore, of the trans-phenomenal being of phenomena (in the sense that the object has being independently of the percipient), though this transphenomenal being is simply the phenomenon in itself, not an unknowable noumenon underlying the phenomenon.

But though Heidegger and Sartre are to that extent realists, their realism is none the less a post-Kantian realism, in that they both emphasize the part played by the subject in the constitution of the world of experience. For Heidegger the organization of the world into a system of relations depends on the interests, the preoccupations (*Besorgen*) of the subject. Man, *Dasein*, is essentially orientated towards the other than himself, and each object appears as a *Zeug* or tool, its meaning or essence residing in its tool-relation, its relation to the preoccupation of the subject. According to the interest or preoccupation of the subject there is the world of the physicist, the world of the ethician, the world of technique and so on; but all these worlds are included in a total system, of which we have a kind of preview or anticipation. This concept of world in general, of an intelligible totality, an inclusive *Umwelt*, is the creation of *Dasein;* it is the system of relations created by the multiple possibilities of *Dasein*, the unified field of those possibilities, though it is due, not to an *a priori* category of the understanding, but to the first characteristic of *Dasein*, its being-in-the-world, its orientation towards the other than self in terms of interest and development of possibilities. This view of the world is obviously strongly reminiscent of Fichte's conception of the world of objects as the field for the self-realization of the ego, the field of the ego's moral activity, though Heidegger does not mean to imply that the brute existence of things is con-

stituted by the ego (he is not an idealist in that sense), but that the intelligible being of things, their meaning, their organization in an intelligible system, is constituted by man's possibilities of self-transcendence. *Dasein* and *Umwelt* are really two aspects of one reality, being-in-the-world. To interpret the world is to construct the world, but this power of construction is limited by the very finitude of man.

The same theme is present in the philosophy of Sartre. It is man, *la realité humaine*, who makes the world to arise, as an organized and intelligible system. Consciousness (*le pour-soi*) does not create being as such, unconscious being (*l'en-soi*), but it organizes it into a system, marking off, as it were, individual objects, and determining their mutual relations in terms of its own interests. Distance, being far away or near, really depends on the interests of the *pour-soi:* America, for instance, is far away to the displaced person in Germany who would like to go there but cannot, while it is nearby to the millionaire who can go there by plane whenever he likes, while to a person who has no interest at all in America it is neither near nor far, it is simply "there". Similarly, the future can be understood only in terms of the possibilities of man: *c'est par la réalité humaine que le futur arrive dans le monde.*[1] In itself *l'en-soi* is opaque, gratuitous, unintelligible: it owes its differentiations and its intelligibility to consciousness, to *le pour-soi.*

But if the Kantian and Fichtean elements in the philosophies of Heidegger and Sartre, together with their peculiar insistence on liberty, might lead one to class them as (partly) idealist philosophies, there is another important element in virtue of which they are more akin to materialism. Original being, *l'en-soi,* is, according to M. Sartre, non-conscious; it is simply itself, opaque, self-identical: *l'être est ce qu'il est.* We really cannot say anything about it except that it is; the ideas of activity and passivity, for example, are human ideas, and being in itself is beyond activity and passivity. Moreover, we are not entitled to apply the category of necessity and say that it is the necessary being, the Absolute. It did not create itself, it is true; but it is simply there, gratuitous, *de trop.* In fine, all we can say of *l'être en-soi* is that it is and that it is what it is. Perhaps it cannot be formally described as material, but that is obviously what it is to all intents and purposes. The shade of "father Parmenides" can be discerned in the background.

Being-in-itself is thus gratuitous, *de trop*; but how does consciousness, *le pour-soi,* arise? At this point Hegel is dragged in from the wings to take his place on the stage. As for Hegel being, emptied of determinate content, passes into not-being and gives rise to the category of becoming, so for Sartre consciousness arises from non-

[1] *L'Être et le Néant,* p. 168.

conscious being through the power of the negation. Consciousness means distance from and presence to at the same time; it is the negation of being-in-itself, but it presupposes being-in-itself and is separated from it by . . . nothing. Being-in-itself contains no negation; it emerges (i.e. *le néant*) only through consciousness, which secretes its own nothingness. To be conscious means to exist at a distance from oneself as present to oneself, and this distance from oneself is no thing: consciousness, then, arises only through a "fissure," a negation, being introduced into being, and it is *le pour-soi* itself which introduces this negation, so that it is in this sense its own foundation. That there is consciousness at all is a contingent fact, for which the "ontologist" can give no certain explanation; but we may say that being-in-itself, which is gratuitous, attempts to found itself (that it is *projet de se fonder*) and that it can do so only through the emergence of consciousness which aims at becoming its own cause or adequate foundation, at attaining the status of *l'en-soi-pour-soi*. In plainer language we may say that brute being has an aspiration to overcome its gratuitous and contingent character by becoming the conscious Absolute, and human consciousness emerges as the means of realizing this aspiration. But this aspiration is doomed to frustration: consciousness is being constantly grasped by the *en-soi*, by that contingency which it cannot escape. Man is a *passion*, a desire to escape from his original contingency, a flight before the past (with its invasion of *facticité*) towards the goal of becoming the Absolute without thereby losing consciousness, i.e. towards the goal of becoming God. But the idea of God, of the *en-soi-pour-soi* is impossible, and as man begins by birth, so he ends by death and relapses into *facticité*. If we look merely at man, at his aspiration to become God, we must admit that he is *une passion inutile*,[1] while if we regard the emergence of individual consciousness as a means whereby *l'en-soi* endeavours to become the conscious Absolute, we must admit that gratuitousness and absurdity have the last word as they had the first word.

In so far as M. Sartre is serious in putting forward this remarkable piece of mythology, one may say that he is proposing a kind of Hegelianism *manqué:* being-in-itself is the aspiration towards the realization of absolute consciousness, but it is doomed to frustration: *l'en-soi* is the alpha and omega, and human life is vain, absurd. Stripped of all Hegelianism, however, M. Sartre's contention is simply that being is meaningless, *de trop*, inexplicable, that consciousness is a mere passing epiphenomenon,[2] and that human life and human history are vain and absurd. It is really at this point

[1] *L'Être et le Néant*, p. 708.

[2] According to M. Sartre, l'âme *est* le corps en tant que le pour-soi *est* sa propre individuation. *L'Être et le Néant*, p. 372.

that the characteristic theme of Sartre and Camus begins, the problem of conduct in a world which has no given significance, in which there are no universal and absolute values, but in which man is free and cannot evade the total responsibility of choice and the creation of values which is involved in choice. But leaving aside for the moment this humanistic theme, I wish to draw attention to the dogmatism contained in the initial presuppositions of M. Sartre. M. Sartre affirms dogmatically the priority of being-in-itself over being-for-itself. That human consciousness reveals itself as consciousness *of*, that it presupposes an object, I have no wish to dispute; but that this implies the derivation of consciousness from non-conscious being does not follow. It is not an evident fact by any manner of means that consciousness is derived from the non-conscious, still less that the non-conscious is, in general, prior to the conscious, to mind; and to suggest that non-conscious being has a kind of urge to become God or the conscious Absolute is to suggest a mythological hypothesis. M. Sartre asserts that being-in-itself is gratuitous, *de trop;* but what is this but an initial and gratuitous presupposition of atheism? Sartre does indeed attempt to show that the idea of God as self-identical consciousness is contradictory, since consciousness involves distinction; but it does not necessarily follow from the fact that finite human consciousness reveals itself as involving distinction, that all consciousness necessarily involves distinction. The logical positivist might remark that no other form of consciousness can have any significance for us, since our idea of consciousness is founded on the only consciousness we experience, human consciousness; but when the theist says that God is infinite selfconsciousness, he is saying that God cannot be less than the consciousness we experience: he does not pretend to have (and indeed cannot have) a clear and adequate idea of what infinite consciousness is in itself, but he has a clear idea of what "not less than" means. In any case, if we leave God out of account and speak simply of the necessary Being, by what right does Sartre affirm, as he does affirm, that there is no such being and that it could not explain contingent being? I am not aware of any philosopher of the first rank who has adopted this strange position. Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza and Hegel no doubt differed in their views as to the character of the necessary Being; but they did not suppose that the notion of such a Being can be dispensed with. If, moreover, it be asserted that the category of necessity is a purely human category, one could obviously make the retort, as far as Sartre is concerned, that in this case the category of contingency is in the same boat, and that instead of declaring that being is *de trop*, M. Sartre would do much better if he observed a discreet and modest agnosticism.

From his initial atheist position M. Sartre draws the conclusion

that there are no absolute values, but that values are the creation of man, the individual man, who in fixing his own ideal creates his own values. However, as the foundation of all values is liberty, it would appear that liberty must be itself a value independently of choice, since man did not choose to be free, but is "condemned" to be free, as M. Sartre puts it. To deny consistently the objectivity of values is not such an easy task as M. Sartre seems to suppose. Heidegger and Sartre distinguish authentic choice and unauthentic choice, and it is very difficult to avoid the impression that the former, authentic choice, is considered to be superior in value to the latter. If there are no objective values, it should make no difference whatever, from the valuational standpoint, what one chooses or how one chooses.

The dogmatism of Martin Heidegger is probably more disingenuous than that of Sartre. He makes play with ideas like contingency and dereliction, insisting on *die Geworfenheit des Daseins*; but the question of a "Thrower" he does not raise, passing it by silently, though it is clear that to a man of Heidegger's particular upbringing the problem must have been present.[1] He does not speak in Sartre's somewhat airy fashion of God and religion; he does not fulminate passionately like Nietzsche; he hardly speaks of the matter at all, and the most he does is to observe that man's concept of being is finite. But what does this prove? That man's apprehension of the Infinite must in any case be a partial and finite apprehension; it certainly does not prove that man can have no knowledge that the Infinite exists or that he cannot even raise the question of the Infinite.

I mentioned that Sartre calls *l'Être et le Néant* an essay in phenomenological ontology. The use of the phenomenological method is common to the existentialists (as a rough generalization at least, this is true), and in my opinion its use constitutes in some respects a strong point and in other respects a very weak point of existentialism. The phenomenological method of Husserl means the objective analytic description of phenomena of any given type. Husserl himself applied the method to the invariable structures of psychic experience (such as "intention," being conscious of, perceiving); but the method can be applied in various fields, to religious or aesthetic experience, for example, or to the perception of values. Husserl regarded the application of this method as a necessary propaedeutic to ontology, which it should precede. For instance, the phenomenologist will consider the essence of "being conscious of," without presupposing any particular ontology or metaphysic, but letting the psychic phenomenon speak for itself. Whether it is possible in practice to exclude all such presuppositions and, if it is possible,

[1] I am speaking of Heidegger as author of *Sein und Zeit*. I have heard it said that his views have changed since, but I do not know if this report is correct or not.

how long it is possible to persevere in the suspension of judgment concerning the existence or mode of existence of the object regarded (the Object of religious experience, for example) is obviously disputable; but the application of the method certainly has its value and some of the existentialists have made a fruitful use of it. Thus in the course of *L'Être et le Néant* M. Sartre gives long, descriptive analyses of time or temporality, of "bad faith," of *le regard*, of love, while Gabriel Marcel has practically done the same for faith (not in the theological sense), hope, love, *disponibilité*; and one can say that the phenomenological analyses of Heidegger, Sartre and Marcel, and of half-existentialists like Lavelle, are admirable pieces of intellectual work. Although Kierkegaard indeed was dead before Husserl was born, and his works were written long before Husserl and Scheler applied the phenomenological method to their respective themes, one can say that he applied the method to phenomena like *Angst* or dread, and it would doubtless be profitable to trace out and compare the different analyses of dread, *Angst, angoisse,* as given by Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre. The use of this method is legitimate enough in itself, and the actual use of it made by the existentialists constitutes, I suggest, one of their strong points.

On the other hand, if one chooses to use the phenomenological method of Husserl, one should either adhere closely to the *epoche*, or, if one does proceed to make existential judgments, one should note carefully the transition from phenomenology to ontology. As an example of what I mean, I shall refer to Sartre's treatment of *la nausée.* In the novel of that name Antoine Roquentin, sitting in the public gardens of Bouville, is depicted as having an experience, i.e. an impression, of the gratuitousness, the inherent contingency of the things around him and of himself; they and he himself appear to him as *de trop*, gratuitous, without rational justification for their existence. Now, I should certainly not deny that an impression of this kind is possible as a subjective experience, and M. Sartre has a perfect right, as a novelist and indeed as a phenomenologist, to describe it; but I suppose that it is clear to every intelligent reader of *La Nausée* that Roquentin's subjective experience is assumed by the author to have objective reference, that it is, implicitly at least, described as corresponding to reality, as affording information about the character of being. But this involves an illicit passage from description to positive doctrine, from phenomenology to ontology. It may be said that M. Sartre proves his doctrine elsewhere. But does he? It is true that in *L'Être et le Néant* he distinguishes ontology from metaphysic;[1] but it is also true that he assumes from the very

[1] By ontology he means phenomenology applied to the structure of being revealed in experience; but ontology in this sense could obviously do no more than reveal the finite and contingent character of actually experienced being.

beginning the gratuitousness of being, the epiphenomenalistic character of consciousness, the finality of death, and indeed all those supposed facts which bring out the absurdity of the world, and of human life in particular. In the exercise of his powers of description and of analysis he shows great virtuosity, intelligence and ability; but when he plays the part of an ontologist, I do not think that it is unfair to call him a dogmatist. To do him justice, one must admit that, like Heidegger (who, as intending to pursue a strictly ontological investigation, does not pretend to employ the *epoche*), he sets out to give a phenomenological ontology and not to act as a phenomenologist pure and simple; but it remains true that he tends to slide from descriptive analyses of subjective experience into existential judgments concerning the objective reference of those experiences as adequate apprehensions of reality. In my opinion he does this because he has already chosen his philosophy. This leads him to single out for description those phenomena which will lend support to the assumed position. That a philosopher should select and dwell on those aspects of reality which illustrate and support his main position is only to be expected (Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, all do this); but if a philosopher builds his system on certain aspects of reality and then supports the system by reference to those aspects, slurring over other aspects, he involves himself in a vicious circle.

Albert Camus proceeds in a similar manner. In *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* he describes and analyses *le sentiment de l'absurde*, and the absurdity of life is illustrated or portrayed in the concrete by dramas such as *Le Malentendu* and stories like *L'Étranger*. The dramas and stories, however, illustrate a thesis which is assumed and not proved, which is taken for granted. Gabriel Marcel has written plays and has subsequently distilled philosophy from them and it may be said that Camus' plays portray life in the concrete and are a legitimate generalization from experience; but one can obviously reply that life has many aspects and that if one consistently chooses only certain aspects for portrayal, one does so in virtue of a preformed judgment as to what life is. Moreover, the possibility of the world and human life having a meaning and purpose which, partly at least, transcends the world, cannot be ruled out legitimately from the beginning; the denial, like the affirmation, of such a meaning and purpose stands in need of some proof; it can neither be taken for granted nor based simply on certain selected aspects of life. To speak of Platonism or Christian theism or of pantheism as escapism, as a refusal to face the facts of life and of the world in general may sound very well in the ears of those on whom any appeal to psychology acts like the voice of the Siren; but it is of little value from the philosophical standpoint, unless first of all the arguments of

the Platonist or of the theist or of the pantheist have been adequately refuted.

So far I have referred mainly to the atheist existentialists, and I have suggested that when Sartre says that atheism is for them a *point de départ*, he must be taken seriously. Atheism is for Sartre a *point de départ*, a dogmatic assumption, though it would perhaps be more accurate to say that it is the fruit of a certain mentality and intellectual atmosphere. He shows no sign of feeling the problem of God in the way in which Nietzsche felt it. For Kierkegaard, on the other hand, man's relation to God is all-important; the supreme choice is the choice of oneself as a creature in relation to the infinite and personal Absolute, God. In spite of their contradictory views on the God of Christianity, Kierkegaard is more akin to Nietzsche than is Sartre, inasmuch as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche were both personal thinkers, whose thought can hardly be understood apart from their lives. But one result of Kierkegaard's intensely personal standpoint is that, while he is able to describe in an admirable manner man's possible attitude to God, man's submissive choice of his God-relationship, man's defiance and sin, the aesthetic and moral planes of existence, and so on, and while he is able, in the name of *Existenz* and "subjectivity," to conduct a polemic against the Hegelian mediation of opposites and the synthetic merging of finite and infinite, he omits altogether to prove objectively the existence of God and the rational justification of the leap of faith; indeed, he expressly denies the legitimacy of natural theology or the metaphysical approach to God. To turn this point into a reproach against Kierkegaard may seem to be an unfair procedure and to involve a misunderstanding of his dialectic, since by faith he does not mean an attitude or activity which could be attained by way of metaphysical speculation. This last point is doubtless true; but from the philosophical standpoint, which is the standpoint with which we are now concerned, one cannot justifiably demand acceptance of an object the existence of which has not been demonstrated. Kierkegaard may indeed be chiefly occupied with the question how one becomes a Christian, i.e. a true Christian, and his words may very well be of value to the Christian; but none the less from the speculative standpoint he demands a leap, and his affirmation of God, when regarded from that standpoint, is a dogmatic affirmation. The words of a twelfth-century Scottish philosopher and theologian, Richard of St. Victor, are here relevant: "I have read concerning my God that He is eternal, uncreated, immense, that He is omnipotent and Lord of all . . . all this I have read; but I do not remember that I have read how all these things are proved. . . . In all these matters authorities abound, but not equally the arguments . . . proofs are becoming rare." If Sartre and Camus dogmatize as to the

absurdity of the world and human life, Kierkegaard dogmatizes as to the existence of God. This may seem a hopelessly abstract and high-and-dry attitude of criticism; but I do not see how any philosopher can deny its relevance.

Gabriel Marcel, the Catholic existentialist, is possibly in the same boat as Kierkegaard; whether he is or not, seems to me to depend on the answer to the question whether he regards his philosophy as simply a phenomenology of *la realité humaine* or as also an ontology and metaphysic. Elsewhere I have suggested that Marcel is pretty well as much a "leaper" as Kierkegaard;[1] but I do not feel quite sure that the accusation is just Let me take an example, to illustrate my meaning. "It is doubtless true to say that there is no other metaphysical problem than the problem, 'What am I?', for it is to this that all the other problems are reducible."[2] Now, if I analyse man, I can find in him the demand for or the hope of immortality, at least as implied in such activities as fidelity to another. If a loved one has died, it depends on me, on my interior attitude, to maintain his or her "presence," without letting this "presence" be degraded to the status of an image, a mere memory; creative fidelity demands this.[3] Is such a line of argument meant to be a description of certain human spiritual activities which imply a hope of immortality, or is it supposed to be a proof of immortality? If the former, one cannot accuse Marcel of dogmatism; if the latter, it would appear to me that he leaps from the desire or hope of immortality to the assertion of immortality, and I should agree with Duns Scotus, who adorned this University centuries ago, when he maintains that one cannot argue from the desire of an object to the actuality of that object; one has first of all to show that the attainment of the object is at least possible. If one could discern with certainty a natural desire for immortality, one might argue to the fact of immortality, provided that one has first shown the rationality of the universe and of natural desires, which in practice means proving the existence of God. If the world were such as Sartre and Camus depict it, the desire of immortality would certainly not show that the human soul actually is immortal.

Again, it is rather difficult to know whether Marcel regards his analysis of man's spiritual activities as constituting a proof of God's existence or not. It may be that an activity such as love implies the presence of the Transcendent in and through which human beings can communicate as persons in the mutual giving and self-sacrifice of love, and one might try, by arguing along the lines indicated by

[1] "*Existentialism and Religion*," in the *Dublin Review* for Spring, 1947.

[2] *Homo Viator*, p. 193.

[3] *Positions et Approches Concrétes du Mystère Ontologique*," in *Le Monde Cassé*, p. 290.

Marcel, to show the "irrationalists" like Sartre and Camus that they have not really thought out their position and its implications, and that the problem of God is more real than they suppose; but it is doubtful if one could prove God's existence, in any strict sense of the word "prove," by reflections such as those of Marcel. Moreover, his distinction between a "problem" and a "mystery" would appear to involve a position analogous to that of Kierkegaard in regard to the proofs of God's existence. Guido De Ruggiero asserts roundly that Marcel's procedure involves a series of leaps to undemonstrated conclusions, and his contention may be true; but if one regards Marcel's philosophy not as a "system" in the ordinary sense, but as an endeavour to reveal to man what he is and to awaken in him the perception of the "meta-problematical," of what Marcel calls the "mystery" of being, the question of the leap and of dogmatism hardly arises. And, even though Marcel's distinction between "mystery" and "problem" is spiritually akin to Kierkegaard's insistence on "subjectivity," I now regard this second line of interpretation as the right one.

According to Guido De Ruggiero,[1] "at bottom, Marcel knows from the beginning where he wants to arrive, and, seeking, he has the air of a man who has already found." But Marcel did not begin as a Christian philosopher, and he claims that his reflections on human existence opened the way to the definitive conversion which took place in 1929, a claim the truth of which one can have no adequate reason to doubt, though it does not necessarily follow, of course, that the considerations which weighed with Marcel would appear probative to another type of philosopher. As to wanting to arrive at a certain conclusion, what would be proved by the existence of such a wish, supposing that it was present? Insistence on "wishful thinking" is so often irrelevant, as can be seen from an example. Lord Russell, in his *History of Western Philosophy*, emphasizes the fact that when St. Thomas Aquinas undertook to prove God's existence, he was already convinced of the truth of the conclusion at which he arrived and that he wanted to arrive at that conclusion. This is quite true; but the relevant question for the philosopher is not what St. Thomas' wishes happened to be, but whether his proofs were cogent or not. It may be that Marcel wanted to arrive at a theistic conclusion and Sartre at an atheistic conclusion; but the relevant question for the philosopher is whether either of them proves his position. As regards Sartre, I am quite sure that he dogmatizes, in substance if not in form; as regards Marcel, I do not feel certain, for the reason which I have indicated. It may be objected that I persist in criticizing the existentialists from a standpoint which is not their own; but then it is precisely their standpoint which I find inadequate.

[1] *Existentialism*, p. 40.

M. Sartre claims that existentialism is a humanism, and I want finally to consider existentialism, under this aspect. M. Sartre rejects the humanism which takes man as an end, since man is always something to be made, not something already made (to practise a cult of Humanity after the style of Auguste Comte is, for Sartre, ridiculous); but he claims that the existentialist doctrine that man is free, that he is the being which transcends itself and creates itself by free choice, that he is his own legislator, unfettered by any absolute values or universal moral law, constitutes a true humanism. Obviously a great deal depends on what one understands by humanism. If by humanism is meant a doctrine about man, then M. Sartre's philosophy is certainly humanistic and M. Sartre himself, as a student of human nature, is a humanist; but if humanism be taken to imply devotion to human interests or concern with human interests, it may well be doubted if the Sartrian existentialism is humanistic. A conviction that man is totally free, that there are no absolute values and that man is responsible neither to God nor his fellows may seem to open up that boundless ocean of possibility of which Nietzsche spoke; but is the liberation more than apparent? Man must choose, he is "condemned" to be free, he cannot but make something of himself (even if he commits suicide, he chooses, he draws a line under his life and says, "that is what I am"); but it makes not the slightest difference ultimately what he chooses, what he makes for himself, since man is *une passion inutile.* A Hitler or a Francis of Assisi, a Nero or a Buddha, what does it matter? If values are the creation of the individual and depend on his choice, there is no standard of valuational discrimination between different types of men or between the ends they set themselves, their ideals. As to authentic and unauthentic choice, authentic choice, if there are no absolute values, is no more valuable or praiseworthy than unauthentic choice, whereas if on the other hand authentic choice is more valuable in itself than unauthentic choice, if, for example, it is objectively better to be a Communist or a Christian as the result of a choice proceeding from an authentic act of the will than simply out of social conformism, there must be an objective standard of value and values are not simply the individual's creation. One cannot have it both ways. M. Sartre might learn something from Plato in this matter. The atheist existentialists seem to attach a value to clear knowledge and decisive choice and action, just as Nietzsche, who theoretically denied the existence of absolute and universal values, clearly thought the "noble" type of man objectively better than the "ignoble." To act with resolution, even with the clear perception of death as the inevitable and final end, seems to constitute a value for Heidegger, while revolt against the absurdity and meaninglessness of existence is admired by Camus, and Sartre attaches value to *engagement.*

Sartre might say that it is not a question of *engagement* having a value antecedent to choice, but that it owes its value simply to the individual's liberty; but does not the affirmation of a value by the individual presuppose the perception of value? The logical consequence of atheism may be, as Sartre, following Nietzsche, says it is, the negation of absolute values; but the conclusion is valid only if the premiss is valid, and if there is an awareness of value which precedes the acceptance or affirmation of value, the premiss is at once rendered doubtful: at any rate it cannot legitimately be taken as a *point de départ.*

In any truly humanistic philosophy account will be taken of all sides of human nature; but if a being from another world were to gain its knowledge of human nature from *L'Être et le Néant, La Nausée, Les Chemins de la Liberté, Le Mur, Huis-clos, La Putain Respectueuse* and *Morts sans Sépulture,* that being would have a very one-sided idea of man. If one touches on this theme, one runs the risk of being misunderstood; it may appear that one is simply moralizing, that one is objecting to a novelist or dramatist introducing certain themes into his novels and plays; but I am not concerned to lay down rules of censorship for novelists and dramatists, but rather to point out that a philosopher who claims to analyse and describe *la realité humaine* and who at the same time omits or degrades man's higher spiritual activities is unfaithful to his task as a philosopher. A novelist, considered as such, may legitimately confine his attention to certain types of people or certain aspects of human nature; but a philosopher of man should possess a comprehensive vision. If he does not possess it, his picture of man will be inadequate, and if he proposes to erect a general philosophy on his analysis of human existence, his general philosophy will be correspondingly inadequate. It requires no great experience of human nature to know that the phenomena which appear to fascinate the attention of M. Sartre actually occur; but if one were to compare the analysis of love, for example, as given by Sartre with that of Gabriel Marcel, one would have to admit, if faithful to the total data, that a level of spiritual activity to which Marcel's eyes are open seems invisible to those of M. Sartre, for whom love is, at best, *une duperie.* This makes more difference than may appear at first sight. Sartre dwells on those aspects and activities of man which illustrate his theory that man is *une passion inutile* and that life is absurd, whereas Marcel discerns those spiritual activities of man which imply at least an appeal to the Transcendent, even if they do not strictly prove its existence. Similarly, whatever one may think of Kierkegaard's rejection of natural theology, it remains true that he discerned and emphasized those activities and attitudes of the spirit which imply a "vertical" transcendence, in contrast to Sartre's exclusively "horizontal"

transcendence. If the philosopher recognizes the existence of those activities and attitudes, he will concern himself seriously with the question of their objective implications; but if he is blind to them, he will naturally pass over the question. Nicolai Hartman, in his great work on ethics, spoke of a blindness to values; M. Sartre seems to me to be one of the myopic in this respect.

In conclusion I should say that existentialism, in spite of its important defects, is of value in that it draws attention to the human person as free and responsible. A rough definition of existentialism, so far as one can give one, might be that existentialism is the descriptive analysis of man as free, self-transcending subject, a descriptive analysis which is itself designed to promote authentic choice. Whether adequate or not, such a definition does at least bring out the fact that the existentialist deals with man as subject, and as free subject; he starts, as Sartre says, with subjectivity. The system of Hegel himself can scarcely appear to us in the same dangerous and threatening light in which it appeared to Kierkegaard, but there are other systems of philosophy, one of which at least is of great practical importance, the effects or implications of which in regard to the human subject are no less dangerous than those which Kierkegaard, rightly or wrongly, considered to follow from the Hegelian system. But if one wishes to protest against such systems in the name of the human person, it is essential to have an adequate idea of the human person, and in this respect Heidegger, and still more Sartre, are radically deficient. Kierkegaard and Marcel have a deeper insight into the nature of the human person, and in that respect their philosophies are superior to those of Heidegger, Sartre and Camus (though, as I mentioned earlier, the phenomenological analyses of Heidegger and Sartre are often excellent). But existentialism as such can, it seems to me, have little future, unless an adequate and faithful descriptive analysis of man-in-the-world is made the basis for, or is united with, an unprejudiced attempt to construct a rational ontological and metaphysical system. Heidegger and Sartre really prejudge the issue from the start, while with Kierkegaard and possibly Marcel subjective impressions and experiences tend to take the place of objective reasoning. Philosophic reasoning can quite well begin with the human person; but without a sustained effort of reasoning no durable philosophy can be developed. Phenomenological analyses, however brilliant they may be, are an insufficient basis for a philosophical system. Moreover, it is one thing to start with "subjectivity" and another thing to surrender to subjectivism; however great the faults of the system, Hegel's insistence on objectivity and "impersonal" thought is not altogether devoid of value.

THEISM [1]

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Theism is a modern word, meaning belief in God. But there is no unanimity about the attributes of God. The Greek *theos* meant a superhuman and in particular an immortal Being. For the Platonists he was a "Soul," and there may be more than one soul. The Christian Fathers—Augustine as well as the Greeks, could say without reproach that God became man in order that man might become divine. The Logos in the Fourth Gospel is God, but not the Godhead. "My Father is greater than I."

But in this essay it will be convenient to accept modern definitions of what we mean by Theism. A. E. Taylor says, "Theism is the doctrine that the ultimate ground of things is a single supreme reality which is the source of everything other than itself and has the characters of being intrinsically complete and perfect and an adequate object of unqualified adoration or worship." To the same effect Flint defines Theism as "the doctrine that the universe owes its existence and its continuance in existence to the reason and will of a self-existent Being, who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good."

These definitions exclude several theories about the nature of God which have been held by many who do not deny His existence.

The Epicureans believed that the gods live their own life in calm enjoyment, not interfering in any way with human affairs. As Ennius says: "Ego deum genus esse semper dixi et dico coelitum, sed eos non curare opinor quid agat humanum genus." Other sects naturally said that this is practically atheism. Aristotle seems to have taught that the relation of man to God is the desire of the moth for the star. He attracts the creatures like a magnet. There is no reciprocating love on God's side. Aristotle has been called the father of Deism. Spinoza also said that we must love God without expecting Him to love us in return—a harsh saying which I think is inconsistent with his later view. The Deism of the eighteenth century practically made God a *roi fainéant*. He created the world, but leaves it to run its own course. All theories which make God purely transcendent and not immanent, including Barth's unfortunate phrase that God is "wholly other" than ourselves, belong to the same type. We can enter into no relations with a Being who is utterly different from ourselves. "In the image of God created He them," says the Book of Genesis.

[1] Series, *Contemporary World-Outlooks* (III).

Polytheism is excluded, since there can be only one Being with the attributes ascribed to God. But a subordinate polytheism certainly exists in popular Catholicism, and in other Christian bodies the doctrine of the Trinity has often been held in a manner which might be called tritheism. In the later Paganism religion was monotheistic without denying minor gods and spirits. The supreme Being may employ superhuman agents.

Metaphysical dualism is obviously excluded. We cannot, if we are theists, believe in an anti-God. It was perhaps the influence of Persia which brought Satan into Judaism and so into Christianity, though for us Satan is pictured as a fallen angel, not as a rival Deity. But, as I shall say presently, we human "amphibia" live and think on different levels. The moralist, as moralist, must be almost a Manichean. We are combatants in a cosmic duel, wrestling, as St. Paul says, not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. Some of the later Platonists, taking advantage of an ambiguous phrase in Plato, believed in "an evil world-soul," but there is certainly no devil in Plato. Modernist theology wishes to abolish the devil; but, as McNeile Dixon says, if we do, belief in God fades at once. "In yes and no all things consist." It is only when we ascend in thought from this world of claims and counter-claims to the eternal realm where God sitteth above the waterflood, that we can contemplate the victory over evil already won. The eternal world is the realm of which we are "citizens": but here we are strangers and pilgrims, *in via*, not *in patria*, as the old theologians said.

To the psychic level belongs the idea of a limited, striving Deity, which has been defended by Mill and more recently by Rashdall and H. G. Wells. It has been associated with a theory which does not necessarily go with it, that of an evolution of God. This theory belongs to a climate of opinion which is perhaps beginning to change under the influence of the dark patch in history which we have now reached. It is the child of the perfectibility theory which began in the eighteenth century and luxuriated in almost insane vapourings in the nineteenth, and of the doctrine of evolution associated with the name of Darwin. Evolution became the frame into which all events had to be fitted. It was forgotten, though Kant had made it quite clear, that evolution—the mechanical unpacking of what was present in germ from the first, and epigenesis, which recognizes the action of new creative activities, are incompatible theories. The first denies, the second asserts, the reality of change. The problem of change is one of the most difficult in philosophy; in mathematics there is identity between the problem and its solution; time does not come in; a sum may be worked backwards as well as

forwards. We may suspect that the popular word "emergence," as used by Lloyd Morgan, Alexander, and others, is well chosen to mask or combine two contradictory theories.

The coalescence of the assumed law of progress and of the method of evolution gave birth to the fantastic notion of a *nisus* towards perfection in nature, or at any rate in human nature. The absurdity of arguing from the historical progress of humanity—assuming that this can be proved—to progress as a law of the universe, becomes more apparent the more we think about it. The human race, after perhaps half a million years of almost stable equilibrium, discovered the use of tools a few thousand years ago. *Homo faber* has made no biological progress; the Cro-Magnon skeletons were those of taller men with larger brains than the modern European; but civilization has made discoveries in the arts of life which I, at any rate, have no wish to disparage. During a comparatively short episode in his career man has made astonishing changes in his habits. Will this era of "progress" continue? We cannot tell. There may be new flowering times of civilization, more golden ages like those of ancient Athens, mediaeval Italy, and I should add the reign of Queen Victoria. But it now seems possible that mankind will commit co-operative suicide; in which case our successors, if we have any, or the theologians of the planet Venus, will doubtless say that the extinction of this noxious species is a strong argument for the providential government of the world. It is even more likely that we shall follow the social insects, who must at one time have been vigorously progressive and inventive, in arriving at a stable equilibrium, which may last for millions of years. For a few generations it would be necessary to liquidate sporadic thinkers; but in time this disturbing variation should be eliminated, and we should be guided only by the frozen intelligence which we call social habit or instinct. The socialist planners will then have won their victory.

However that may be, there is not the slightest reason to suppose that there is any tendency to progress in the universe as a whole—an absurd and "blasphemous" idea, according to Bradley—or in any part of it that we know except in the recent history of the white-skinned section of the species to which we happen to belong. The *nisus* to which Alexander gives so much importance seems to be imaginary. Stability is the rule; change a rare exception.

Even the most hopeful of wishful thinkers know that as Lucretius says we are only leaseholders on this planet. The time will come when our home will be no longer habitable. For the last hundred years it has been believed by physicists that not only our globe but the whole universe is doomed. The Second Law of Thermodynamics, which the French call the principle of Carnot, commits us to believe in an irreversible process which must end in the extinction of all

life everywhere. It may be that science has not yet said the last word on this subject. The activities of the cosmic rays have not yet been fully explored. If the accepted view is right, the clock which is now running down must have been wound up at some date which we could name if we knew it; and presumably whatever power wound it up once may wind it up again. But if there is any recuperative agency in nature, it has not yet been discovered. Origen, who accepted as revealed truth the end of the existing cosmic order, believed that there has been and will be an infinite series of worlds following each other. It seemed to him hardly credible that God would allow a time to come when nothing will happen any more. There can be no revelation on such a subject, but at present we have no right to believe that life in the universe will last for ever. It follows that if God is "organic with the universe," if the world is as necessary to God as God is to the world, the time will come when God will cease to exist, or will pass into a dreamless sleep, "lost to time and use and name and fame." Such a Being would not be the God of religion. Of course, if time is unreal, the problem need not be stated in this way; but many thinkers have felt that if time is "the moving image of eternity," the time-form of eternity must be perpetuity, and the idea of a dead universe, with a temperature of -273 degrees centigrade, is hard to reconcile with belief in an intelligent Creator. This however is not conclusive. The nature of time may exclude perpetuity.

Christianity teaches quite definitely that though the creation may be the necessary result of the character of God, it is not an essential part of His nature. As Coleridge put it, if G = God and W = the world, then for Christianity $G - W = G$. Some have thought that the relation of an artist to his works is perhaps the best analogy of the relation of God to the world. There is nothing illogical in unilateral dependence. Platonism asserts this quite as strongly as Christian theology.

Besides the influence of the supposed cosmic law of progress, which the Catholics call the last Western heresy, and the idea of evolution as the key to history, we have to reckon with modern democratism, which dislikes the picture of God as an absolute monarch. It is not polite to smile at our friends while they are at their devotions, but an American on democracy sometimes talks like a fool. "God is not known, He is used. If He proves Himself useful, the religious consciousness asks for no more."[1] "The higher man will not tolerate old-fashioned theism."[2] "Whatever the God of heaven and earth is, He surely can be no gentleman."[3] "God may draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity."[4]

Christian Theism is also incompatible with the fashionable anti-

[1] Leuba. [2] W. James. [3] *Idem.* [4] G. H. Johnson.

intellectualism. "Distrust of the intellect," says Radhakrishnan, "is the characteristic note of recent philosophy. To-day we have nothing else than contempt for the tribe of thinkers. It has become the fashion to idealize impulse over reason, sentiment over thought, and to denounce all system-making." This is not overstated. "Truth," says William James, "is merely a preliminary means to other vital satisfactions." "It is a mark of great coarseness," says Le Roy, "to wish to be right. It shows a great want of culture." "All our decisions," says James again, "have as their sole meaning a better promise for the world's outcome. Be they false or be they true, the meaning of them is their meliorism." This is pragmatism, the doctrine that we may believe what we choose as our beliefs at our own risk, since truth has no other meaning than what suits us. "An idea," says Vaihinger, the author of the notorious *Philosophie des Als-ob*, "in spite of its theoretical nullity, may have great practical importance."

This looks like the extreme of scepticism. It is quite inconsistent with the Christian belief in the Holy Spirit, whose gifts are "wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord." It denies either the existence of absolute truth or our power of reaching it. Plato's brave act of faith that the wholly real is wholly knowable, though not wholly known, is far nearer the Christian position. We may wonder that philosophers should so utterly contemn and distrust the instrument with which they do their work. Perhaps the main explanation is that these men have made the elementary mistake of identifying two very different faculties of the mind, those which the Greeks called *Nous* and *Dianoia*, the Latins *Intellectus* and *Ratio*. The lower reason or understanding, with which natural science does its work, is by no means to be despised or distrusted. We are often told that natural science, being an abstract study, for its own purposes disregards all the higher values. This is not true. Science is a disinterested pursuit of truth, which is an ultimate value. But it is an abstract study, because it is concerned only with quantitative measurements, which are not applicable to intellectual and spiritual realities. What the Greeks called *Nous* and the schoolmen *Intellectus* is the whole personality acting under the guidance of its highest part, a faculty which, as Plotinus says, all possess though few use. The Platonic *Nous* is almost the same as the Pauline *Pneuma*, and I think we may say with the Indian *Atman*. It is the Soul become Spirit, the self transfigured in a life of discipline by the indwelling Spirit of God, which Christians, following St. Paul, identify with the Spirit of Christ, whose last words on earth, according to the Gospel of Matthew, were, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the world." The Soul become Spirit has not renounced the duty and

privilege of earnest thinking, which makes us men. William James congratulates Bergson for having finally killed "that beast," the intellect. Such language is unworthy of a philosopher, unless he has quite misunderstood the meaning of "intellect." Pragmatism has the sin of wilful self-deception, though some of its adherents, like Schiller of Oxford, were really very honest thinkers. Pascal's words, *il faut s'abêtir*, have shocked many of his admirers; I do not think that they fairly represent his position. The submission of the intellect, demanded by Catholics, is another thing. No one has protested more energetically against the prevalent anti-intellectualism than the ablest Catholic writers; but Catholicism is a religion of authority, exacting obedience like that of soldiers on a campaign. Catholics are not willing to admit that events in the past and future, like the creation of the world in time and the day of judgment, cannot be supernaturally revealed.

When Bergson says that the superficial ego is intelligence and the profound ego is intuition, he ought to have said that the superficial ego is reason and the profound ego is intelligence.[1] From this initial misunderstanding the confusion continues in all his writings. He has a sympathy with mysticism as an intuitional type of religion; but though many mystics have not been philosophers, nothing can be more alien to the spirit of mysticism than to base faith on the wish to believe. Faith begins as an experiment and ends as an experience; but though the truths which religious experience reveals to us are not within the purview of natural science, they are assuredly within the province of the intellect, if we know what the word means.

Pantheism, as expounded in Pope's *Essay on Man*, "as full, as perfect, in a hair as heart," is of course incompatible with Theism. Reality is a kingdom of values, and values are essentially hierarchic. Some Indians, and certainly Emerson, who was much under their influence, have sought to attain unity by wiping out all distinctions, an error which has inevitably lent itself to caricature. Krause was the first to coin the word panentheism, the doctrine of divine immanence, in contrast with pantheism. Panpsychism, the theory that all things are in various degree possessed of life, is not inconsistent with theism. The difficulty of reconciling the world of values, which must contain negative as well as positive values, with the neutral world as known to science, must be dealt with briefly when we come to the problem of evil. The man of science has no right to blame the parasite or to lecture the cuckoo; but it may be that perception, as distinguished from sensation, always has an element of valuation.

Immanence, as opposed to identification, implies transcendence. It also implies that the world of space and time, in which we live

[1] Sheen, *God and Intelligence*, p. 64.

and within which we have experience of the presence of God, is not sundered from reality. The world as we know it is only a shadow of the world as God knows it, but as the Quaker Isaac Penington says, "though every truth is shadow except the last, every truth is substance in its own place, though it be but a shadow in another place. The shadow is a true shadow as the substance is a true substance." Some thinkers, like Spinoza, have been accused of atheism, though they might more plausibly be accused of acosmism. The modern disciples of Heracleitus, like Bergson, who picture the world as a perpetual flux, a shoreless ocean in which all is movement without anything that moves, and the modern disciples of Parmenides, among whom we may reckon Bradley on one side of his thought, are in danger of reducing appearance to an appearance of nothing. The latter deny real change and real movement, and give us a world in which nothing happens. For Plato, time is a moving *image* (εἰκών not εἴδωλον) of eternity. The image must resemble its archetype as far as its nature allows. The sensible world is, we may say, a sacrament of the intelligible world. The monism which makes the eternal world alone real sucks all the reality out of our pictures of the spiritual. Nirvana has no qualities. In grasping at infinity these thinkers find only zero. Some Christian mystics have followed the "negative road" too far.

Among all else which threatens to disappear under this treatment is personal existence. The problem of personality is exceedingly difficult. The ancients needed no word for it, and on the whole I agree with those who have said that the importance of self-consciousness has been over-emphasized in modern philosophy. Our personality is in the making; Lotze says that personality in the full sense is an attribute of God only. Keyserling in his admirable early book *Unsterblichkeit* says that mysticism always ends in an impersonal immortality. This judgment must not be disregarded; but impersonal is a negative word, and personality has no well defined meaning. From the point of view of the present essay the most important question is this. The spiritual life is a growth or transformation of the soul into spirit, and the Spirit of God is one. "We are all made to drink into one Spirit." The mystics have always made union with God their ideal. The dialectic of mystical philosophy demands that since reality (the intelligible world) is a unity in duality of thought and its object, we must think of an absolute unity "beyond existence" in which even this duality is transcended. In rare moments of ecstasy, many of them thought, we may even pass out of our finite selves and be "alone with the Alone." Such rare and transient experiences cannot be judged by those who have not had them. Personally I do not think that we can ever lose ourselves so completely as this. I value the words of Plotinus, who himself believed in

the possibility of such a state: "to try to rise above *Nous* is to fall outside it." But the question which I wish to put is this: do we in prayer and meditation ever leave behind the "I" and "Thou" relation in our approach to God? When we speak of personality in God—we had better not say that God is a Person[1]—is not this what we mean—"Speak to Him now, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet; closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet"? If "God is love," love is an ultimate, and if personality can be transcended, love is not an ultimate, for we cannot love ourselves, even if we believe that we do not exist. "Mike, have you seen Tim lately?" "Yes, I saw him yesterday, on the opposite side of the street. But when we got to the middle of the road, faith, it was neither of us." The two Irishmen cannot have found much to say to each other after that discovery. From my own poor experience I should say that prayer is neither a dumb-bell exercise nor a soliloquy.

We are addressing a Being who is not ourselves but with whom we can have communion. "In Heaven" our personalities remain distinct though not separate. Spiritual growth enlarges our circumference without abolishing our centre.

One of the chief difficulties in accepting Theism comes from the failure to follow Eckhardt in distinguishing between the Godhead and God. Eckhardt in his popular preaching speaks of them as if they were separate Beings, which was not his intention. But it is important to recognize that the God of religion is not the Absolute who "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." The God whom we worship is God as He reveals Himself to us in His attributes as perfect Goodness or Love, Truth, and Beauty, and with whom we may have communion in prayer. It is strange how much confusion has been brought into philosophy by not acting on this obvious truth. For example, many modern commentators on Neo-Platonism represent the Plotinian Absolute whom that philosopher calls the One, the First Principle, or the Good (the Perfect would be a better translation, since moral goodness is not thought of in the Supreme) by the word God which Plotinus does not use of the Absolute. The result of this gratuitous mistake is to throw the whole philosophy out of gear. The goal of the Platonist is certainly not to "swoon into nothingness." His heaven is not Nirvana, but the full and rich realm contemplated by Spirit, our own world apprehended in its complete meaning. It would be a mistake to compare the so-called Platonic Trinity—the Supreme, the Intelligence, and the Soul of the World, with the Christian Trinity; but there are resemblances. The attributes of the Logos are very much like those of the Platonic *Nous*, especially if with St. Paul we regard the

[1] Goethe says, "Der Professor ist eine Person, Gott ist keine."

glorified Christ and the Spirit as One Being. In the later dogmatic controversy the Church decided that no divine honours were too great to be paid to Christ in His relation to the Father. St. Paul, as is well known, taught that as the result of His self-sacrifice for man He was invested with higher honours—"equality with God"—than He had before. This is contradicted in the Fourth Gospel. Some have thought that a consistent Platonist would have been content with the Arian Christ. But I wish to insist that we think on different levels. On what St. Paul calls the psychic level, on which we mostly live, we see everywhere that tension—"like that of the bow or the lyre," as Heracleitus says, that strife of contending principles which some modern thinkers would have us regard as ultimate truth. In this sphere "we see not yet all things put under God"; "the prince of this world" is, for the Johannine Christ, the devil. On the level of Spirit, the battle is already decided, but this is not the "vale of soul-making" in which our probation is passed. As for the sphere of the Godhead, "whom no man hath seen or can see," we are wiser to say nothing. It is in the second plane, not in the first or the third, that "reality" is to be found. The Absolute is beyond existence; the world of space and time is the real world polarized and displayed in an imperfect medium. In thus admitting the imperfection of our knowledge, we are making no concessions to irrationalism. There is nothing irrational in recognizing that there are many things which we neither know nor can expect to know. Providence gives us enough light to live by; our needs are provided for, but not our curiosity.

What do we mean by revelation? We mean a truth, or a body of truths which we could not arrive at ourselves, but which is imparted to us by an authority which we are bound to regard as infallible. Historically, within the life of the western nations, four seats of authority have been recognized; the dogmas promulgated by an institutional church, which claims to be protected against error by divine inspiration; a sacred book, dictated by supernatural wisdom and immune from error in all its parts; the discoveries of human reason, for a time in logical argument and then in the progress of natural science; and what is called the inner light or the testimony of the Holy Spirit. I postpone the discussion of this last till I come to the ontological argument. The other three are now generally admitted to be indefensible. I need say no more about the infallible Church and the infallible book. The conflict between religion and science in the nineteenth century was a battle between dogmatic materialism and materialistic dogmatism. Both, we may hope, are dead and buried. No philosophy can be erected on materialism, a world-view illegitimately based on naïve realism, and now abandoned by the ablest leaders in the natural sciences. Biology and psychology are not content to be brought under the laws of the inorganic world.

Matter itself has been defecated to a transparency. Relativity has brought uncertainty into the arguments of Euclid and even of Newton. The very existence of laws of nature has been called in question; they are alleged to have only statistical validity. Incidentally I deprecate the attempts of some religious apologists to make capital out of "indeterminateness." Those who try to find God in gaps will be in a tight place when the gaps begin to close. On the other side it should by this time be plain that suspensions of the laws of nature require a proof which for events of long ago is not available, and that if they could be established they prove nothing of value for religion. Miracle may be, as Goethe said, the dearest child of faith; it can never be the parent of faith in the higher religion.

What subjects are capable of being revealed, in the sense I have given to the word? Events in the past and in the future cannot be so revealed. *Mundum incepisse sola fide tenetur*, says Thomas Aquinas. How could such a fact be revealed? I do not think that Christ ever claimed to reveal facts about the future. If He was fully man, as we believe, He knew no more about the future than we do. That He was willing to accept the current Hebrew ideas about Paradise, Hades, and Gehenna need not surprise us. All eschatology is symbolic; from the nature of the case it must be so. This means of course that I regard the time-honoured proof from prophecy, which was the sheet-anchor of primitive Christian controversy against the Jews, and which has obviously modified in several places the narrative of the Gospels, as wholly worthless. Attempts are now being made to establish the possibility of "precognition." I do not believe a word of it.

Are we then to admit that there is no such thing as revelation? I am far from thinking so. In the first place there is the solid and coherent evidence of the mystics, who have had visions of God in many different parts of the word, in many periods, and in many religions. I have studied their testimonies for many years, and they are far too cogent, and far too similar to each other, to leave any room for doubt that they are what they claim to be. Their descriptions are often indistinct; how should they not be? A man can hardly be inside and outside the mystical state at the same time; he is attempting to describe what language was never meant to express. But he knows that the vision was authentic. As for the objection that the value of this testimony is subjective and not transferable, it is nonsense. As I have said before, if a dozen honest men tell me that they have climbed the Matterhorn, I am satisfied that the summit of that mountain is accessible, though I shall never get there myself. We are not all equally gifted as contemplatives, any more than as musicians. But want of attention is the chief obstacle. The still small voice does not shout at us. If we spend a perfunctory

five minutes a day in thinking about God and the spiritual world, what can we expect? The testimony of the mystics cannot establish Christianity, but it is a strong and I think sufficient argument for Theism, since all the contemplatives are agreed that what they have experienced was not a figment of their own imagination, but spiritual communion with a living Being.

But besides this, I maintain that some of the attributes of ultimate reality are revealed to us in what are called the absolute or intrinsic values, Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. There is good authority for this belief. Windelband says: "Logical, ethical, and aesthetic values make up the entire range of the human value-activity which can lay claim to general recognition and the necessity of actual unconditionedness. In each of these provinces the empirical mind has a significance which transcends the mind itself. In its metaphysical significance it is a rational community of spiritual primary reality that transcends all experience. There can be no further universal values beyond these three." And Bradley: "Goodness, Beauty, and Truth are all there is which in the end is real. Their reality, appearing amid chance and change, is beyond these and is eternal. In whatever world they appear, that world so far is real." These are the attributes under which we know God; this is the real world in which His thoughts are objectified.

These three ultimate values are "a threefold cord not quickly broken." They have each their own characters, and cannot be either identified or made subordinate to each other. The sense of duty speaks to us in the imperative, and sets the "ought-to-be" against the "is." In this it differs from Truth and Beauty. But they are alike in this, that they depend on nothing beyond themselves; they have an absolute quality. "If a man seeks the good life for anything outside itself," says Plotinus, "it is not the good life that he seeks." Of course we may be in doubt what is our duty; we may make mistakes in seeking the truth; we may be poor judges of beauty; but when we know what is right we must do it, "in scorn of consequence"; when we know what is true we must believe it; when we know what is beautiful we must admire it. To say "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise"; or "Evil, be thou my good"; or "Fair is foul and foul is fair," is blasphemy against the God who has under these three attributes made Himself known to us.

Some have suggested a fourth ultimate value—Holiness. But Holiness is rather the feeling of reverence which we feel towards any of the three ultimates; and Life, which Bergsonians would like to add, is not admissible as an ultimate value. There are some things which we would all die rather than do.

These are for me sufficient reasons for believing in God. God reveals himself to us by degrees. Knowledge of self and knowledge

of God proceed *pari passu*. Self-knowledge means self-transcendence. The self of the psychologist and of ordinary political and ethical theories is, as Ritchie says,[1] "a product of bad metaphysics and bad science." We may learn something from the Indians here. Our religion should deliver us from isolation, which is a terrible thing, and it is in and through God that we come to know ourselves, each other, and the world.

The classical four arguments, ontological, cosmological, teleological and moral, are somewhat under a cloud, but we cannot reject them as worthless, and something must be said about them.

The original form of the ontological proof was that the greatest object that we can conceive must exist, because existence is a necessary part of perfection. Every schoolboy can chuckle over Kant's remark that to have a hundred dollars in my mind is a very different thing from having them in my purse. But the argument was meant to refer only to our thought of God, not of a hundred dollars. Thomas Aquinas, as is well known, rejects the argument as sophistical, but in spite of his immense reputation only two of the schoolmen follow him in rejecting it.[2] Modern Catholic writers are shy of it. The Catholic doctrine is that belief in God is a "valid inference"; but that direct incontrovertible knowledge—what they call ontologism—is not to be claimed. Some of the Thomists possibly claim too much for logic and too little for inspiration. It is the nature of religious experience that we are in contact with something far beyond the categories of the understanding. "Thou criedst unto me from afar," says Augustine, "and I heard as the heart heareth." But it seems to me that the ontological argument, when rather differently stated, is valid and valuable. It is really one which Aquinas himself uses: *impossibile est naturale desiderium esse inane*. Our highest intuitions and aspirations cannot be in a conspiracy to deceive us. In every philosophy we reach a point where a man must trust himself. Strictly, the alternative is not impossible; it is only, to use a word which Lotze employs, intolerable. Pringle Pattison says very well: "that our ideals themselves should perish, that nothing worth existing should have any pledge of continuance or growth, that the world of values, in short, should have no relation to the world of facts—that is the one intolerable conclusion. Because it has nothing to do with any private hopes or fears, we feel that the refusal to entertain it is a judgment of objective validity."[3] The intuitive form of the argument is well developed by Lossky, the Russian philosopher.[4] Our minds when they are at their best turn to God; this is ground for a reasonable act of faith that God is not a will of the wisp.

[1] *Philosophical Studies*, p. 231.
[2] A. E. Taylor in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*.
[3] *The Idea of God*, p. 45.
[4] *The World as an Organic Whole*, p. 79.

The argument is easily combined with the mystical confidence in the inner light, and here it is worth remembering that the mystics did not regard this illumination as infallible; they warn us frequently against "the false light."

The cosmological argument from the "contingency" of the world to a first cause seems to me defective, though Taylor and others defend it. We should have to turn it and say not "because the contingent is, therefore the necessary being is," but "because the contingent is not, therefore the necessary being is." We have an almost instinctive desire to turn from the many to the one, from the part to the whole, from the doubtful to the necessary. This may be the source of the theory of a *nisus* already referred to.

The teleological argument, often called the argument from design, is treated with great respect by Kant, who calls it "the oldest, the clearest, and that most in harmony with the common reason of mankind." The word teleology should properly mean the science of the perfect, not the science of finality; it is not inappropriate to an organic view of processes. There has been an unending debate between the mechanical and the vitalistic theories of causation. It would be impossible in this short essay to give even a summary of the attempts made to establish one at the expense of the other, or to reconcile them. Between the mechanical theory that the whole is the product of the parts in mutual interaction, and the dualistic theory of intervention in the natural order by a supernatural power, comes the organic theory that the whole is ideally prior to the parts and causes the actions and reactions of which the mechanicists cannot give a satisfactory explanation. The Socrates of Xenophon uses the argument from design from the human standpoint. Plato does not encourage this argument; he pictures the Demiurge as bringing harmony out of chaos, partially imparted by natural "necessity." Aristotle does not greatly differ. He is contemptuous of the materialist atomists who ascribe the activities even of living beings to accident or chance. He believed in an immanent principle working towards an end; mechanism is the servant of teleology. This is an organic theory, but dominated by acceptance of final causes. Stoicism may perhaps be called pantheistic naturalism. "Necessity" is ubiquitous, as Democritus had said, but we must venerate the laws of nature as the laws of God. It has been said that Calvinism acknowledges only one Will in the universe. Calvinism is the Christian form of Stoicism.

Augustine makes history teleological; it is the method by which providence is to bring mankind into the City of God. This is a dangerous theory, which has led many in modern times to think that the course of events must be a progress from the worse to the better, and a progressive self-realization of an immanent Spirit.

Spinoza blames those who attribute natural phenomena, and

especially injurious events, to the will of God, and argues that an omnipotent Being cannot act purposively. But his *scientia intuitiva* recognises that the world which God has made must be good.

The Deism of the eighteenth century has now few supporters. Pope's *Essay on Man* assumes that the order of nature is ordained by God, and that all partial evil is universal good. "If plagues and earthquakes break not heaven's design, Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?" The argument of Bishop Butler's *Analogy* follows that line. It is fatally easy to turn it into an argument against natural theology instead of a defence of revealed religion. Here teleology is closely connected with the problem of evil, which remains to be considered. Voltaire's *Candide*, an ironical satire on the optimism of Leibniz, is a famous refutation of such superficial attempts to justify the ways of God to man.

Shaftesbury's aesthetic teleology is interesting as an argument for Theism from the beauty and perfection of the natural order. We cannot follow him in the complacency and confidence which we find in most writers of that cheerful period, when all problems seemed to have been solved; the appeal from the beauty of the world—and we may remember that industrialism had not yet disfigured the face of one of the most gracious parts of Europe—is quite justified. Plotinus had not forgotten Plato's belief that we may ascend from the contemplation of visible beauty to its invisible prototype. "What can be more beautiful," he asks, "than the world Here except the world Yonder?"

This is not the place to discuss the deistic school from Herbert of Cherbary to Toland and Collins. It has been unduly forgotten and disparaged, for the protest against resting faith on external authority only was sound enough. But whereas when the Cambridge Platonists said, "We oppose not reason to religion, for religion is most rational," they meant by reason *intellectus* not *ratio*, the Deists maintained that there is nothing "mysterious" in Christianity. In other words, they were rationalists who rejected Platonism and mysticism, and rationalism so interpreted easily becomes irreligious.

Attempts to reconcile mechanicism with teleology have been made by Kant, and especially by Lotze, who shows, in his own words, "how universal is the extent and how subordinate is the significance of the mechanical in the structure of the world." Without discussing this very difficult problem, I will suggest a few principles which seem to me important.

The existence of directive purpose, what Paley called prospective contrivance, in nature, as opposed to chance or accident, cannot reasonably be disputed. It is sometimes supposed that nineteenth century science was opposed to teleology. Nothing can be more untrue. Kelvin wrote: "Science positively asserts creative power.

There is nothing between absolute scientific belief in creative power and the acceptance of the theory of a fortuitous concurrence of atoms." Darwin wrote: "Our minds refuse to accept the grand sequence of events as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts from such a conclusion." Francis Darwin said: "One of the greatest services rendered by my father to the study of natural history is the revival of teleology." Asa Gray said: "Let us recognize Darwin's great service to natural science in bringing back to it teleology." Huxley, too, recognizes that there is a wider teleology which is not touched by the doctrine of evolution, but is actually based on the fundamental proposition of evolution.[1] Divine power may be adduced to account for everything or nothing; it cannot be called in to account for some things and not others. Science cannot work with such a dualism.

Directive purpose is sometimes below, sometimes within, and sometimes above consciousness.

Purpose belongs to the time-series, within which God carries out His finite acts of will. In eternity there are no unfulfilled purposes.

The notion of a single purpose in creation is untenable. What connexion can there be between happenings on our planet and those on another inhabited world a million light years away from us? The universe was not created for our sakes. Every purpose is necessarily finite, with a beginning, middle, and end. An everlasting purpose is everlastingly frustrate. To say that God foreknows what is going to happen does not imply that it could not have happened otherwise. Foreknowledge is not the same as predestination.

The teleological argument has a real value against the notion that no *mind* is discernible in nature. I do not think we need be disturbed by recent opinions that the laws of nature are only statistical, and that in the ultimate elements of matter real indeterminacy may prevail. Planck warns us against the attempt to rehabilitate chance. But this argument does not lead us all the way to the God of religion, for nature's contrivances are not always beneficent; nature shows no signs of moral purpose.

The moral argument, which alone is fully accepted by Kant, is on a different footing, because moral obligation depends on one of the ultimate values, which stand in their own right, and are, as theists believe, a real revelation of the nature of God in relation to His creatures. No more need be said about it here.

We come lastly to the difficulties in the way of theistic belief. There are some questions which we cannot answer and must leave alone. We do not know why there is a world. We do not know the relation between the Godhead as absolute and the creation, though

[1] Alfred Noyes, *The Unknown God*, pp. 68 *seq.*

we must decisively reject the popular theory that God is "organic with the world" and has no reality outside that relation.

We do not know whether Space and Time, whether taken separately or together, are finite or infinite, or whether Kant's "antinomy" is in its nature insoluble. I am disposed to think myself that Space and Time in themselves have no qualities, being the warp and woof of the canvas on which we draw pictures of external reality.

We are unable to picture the eternal and spiritual world except under symbolic forms which we know to be inadequate and often misleading.

That the external world is sacramental, a "moving image" of the spiritual world, we believe; but how, if at all, do events in time affect—we may say alter—the world above time and space? They are not two separate worlds, but we do not fully understand the relation between them.

These are examples of problems which do not invalidate our belief in God, because they are plainly beyond our knowledge, and we have no claim to know things which do not concern us as human beings. But there is one great problem which does trouble us because we think we ought to know the answer to it, and we are not satisfied with the answers which are made. This, I need not say, is the problem of evil. There is no doubt that this is the great obstacle to faith in the minds of our contemporaries. It has become more urgent in consequence of the terrible events of the last thirty years, which have brought home to us, as never before, the extremities of human wickedness and human suffering which from time to time are disclosed on the pages of history. It will therefore be necessary to consider this problem at some length, though we shall not be able to offer any complete solution of it. To expose the inadequacy of some answers which have been given may make the nature of the problem more clear.

The problem has been stated plainly and candidly by Augustine. "Either God is unwilling to abolish evil or He cannot. If He is unwilling, He is not good; if He cannot, He is not omnipotent." Lucretius says that the world cannot be directed by divine power; it is so full of faults—*tanta stat praedita culpa*. Mill, in a well-known passage, refuses to call any Being good who is not what he means by good when he applies the word to his fellow-creatures; and if there is a Being who can send him to hell for not so calling him, "to hell I will go." And, he says: "in sober truth, nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another are nature's everyday performances. Nature has hundreds of hideous deaths in reserve, such as the cruelty of a Domitian never surpassed. All this nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice."

But for whom is evil a problem? Science is morally neutral. It describes and sometimes tries to explain; but to justify the ways of God to man is none of its business. It is not a problem either for optimists or pessimists. The former is a barometer stuck at set fair; the latter is a barometer stuck at stormy. No sensible man would give sixpence for either of them. The optimist, we are told, is a man who would buy from a Jew and sell to a Scot and expect to make a profit; the pessimist is a man who of two evils chooses both. The former shouts with Browning, "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world"; the latter agrees with Schopenhauer that this is "a really wicked way of thinking, a bitter mockery of the unspeakable misery of humanity." From this latter point of view one might write a plausible essay on "The Problem of Good." Optimism and pessimism are largely temperamental. The optimist is usually satisfied not so much with the world as with himself; sometimes, however, he sings to keep up his spirits. The pessimist, if he is not neurotic, is a man who dislikes being disappointed; life for him may be a series of pleasant surprises. Different types of pessimism, due to very different causes, may be studied in von Hartmann, Leopardi, James Thomson, Cowper in his fits of religious mania, and Thomas Hardy.

Nor is evil a problem for the Manichean or Zoroastrian, for whom God and the Devil are pitted against each other in a never ending battle. Good and evil are equally real; "in yes and no all things consist." Reality is so constituted. For the theist evil is a problem, perhaps the greatest of all problems. Let us consider briefly the solutions which have been offered. "What we call moral goodness is a human attribute, and not a divine." God is not solely a moral Being; He has other interests which do not concern us. For morality, we are told, evil is unconquered; for religion God is supreme. No doubt this is true, and the distinction already insisted on between the God with whom we have communion and the Absolute must here be remembered. The outcome of this view is the complete resignation to a power which seems to be neither just nor merciful. This is the moral of the book of Job. But even this noble poem ends like a Victorian novel. The patriarch recovers his prosperity, and is consoled for the loss of his first family by the presence of the three ladies Dove, Cassia, and Eye-paint. Akin to this attitude is the proud submission of Stoicism and Calvinism. The pot has no rights against the potter. This creed does not discourage benevolence, but it does extinguish pity, which can hardly be felt by God, if He wills the existence of beings who are only unhappy means to an end which does not interest them. Stoical courage may end in Promethean defiance, like that of Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship*.

The most terrible aspect of this treatment of evil is not as an explanation of earthly suffering, to which a brave man may steel

himself, but in the acceptance of an eschatology which outrages our feelings of what we have a right to expect from a God who has revealed Himself as love. We are sometimes amazed to find in Christian casuistry no mention of cruelty among the deadly sins. But such as men are, such will God appear to them to be; and the converse is equally true. Dante has no doubt that divine "love" created his horrible inferno, for the inmates of which "there is no hope of death." *Questi non hanno speranza di morte.* Christian apologists must not extenuate the appalling evils wrought by the doctrine, held with equal determination by Catholics and Protestants, that an immense number, probably the majority of mankind, are doomed to an eternity of unimaginable torture. St. Thomas Aquinas thought that the spectacle of these torments will augment the happiness of the saved; Peter Lombard says the same; Jonathan Edwards says: "the view of the misery of the damned will double the ardour of the love and gratitude of the saints in heaven." "You cannot stand" (says this amiable divine) "before an infuriated tiger; what will you do when God rushes upon you in his wrath?" "God holds sinners over the mouth of hell like so many spiders; He hates them and will trample them beneath His feet with inexpressible fierceness." This dreadful fate awaits all who do not belong to the "true" Church. The Romish "popular catechism" of Cardinal Perrone says that Catholics who become Protestants "are damned irremediably for all eternity." Their virtues will not avail them at all.

I know that these doctrines may be supported from some passages in the New Testament; but I do not think that the future has been or can be revealed to man, and I do believe that Christ came to reveal God as love. In the Church of England, at any rate, these threats have withered away, and I am far from regretting it.

Traditional Christian eschatology is horribly cruel and unjust. Surely we are all "over bad for blessing and over good for banning." Such doctrines only aggravate the problem of evil. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" is a question which rings through the whole of the Old Testament, and there can be only one answer to it. As regards future compensation for the ills of this world, we know very little; but surely both reward and punishment must be *in pari materia.* We cannot really picture beatified spirits living in a state of "solid comfort," in the words of a nineteenth century hymn, still less indulging in "the shout of them that triumph, the song of them that feast." And the penalty for being a bad man is to become a worse man, not to be baked in an oven. We can understand the wish of religious teachers to paint the choice between good and evil in bright and lurid colours, but I am convinced that these crude symbols do more harm than good. The Russian theologian and philosopher S. L. Frank says: "There is not the slightest need

for me to try and peep into the future of my soul after death, and this indeed is impossible, to say nothing of the fact that the word future loses all definite meaning when applied to what lies beyond the confines of earthly time. I know with complete certainty now that I am eternal."[1]

A favourite solution is that God is not omnipotent. He may be limited by spiritual powers of evil, who will ultimately be defeated (modified dualism), or obstructed by some intractable material, such as "matter." Or He may be only *primus inter pares*, partially dependent on the cooperation of souls, who according to some theories are co-eternal with Himself.

Those who believe that God is "organic with the world," and that He has no existence apart from the creation, are almost obliged to adopt one of these explanations. For the Christian, none of them is acceptable or necessary. We do not know how or why God created an imperfect world; we cannot expect to know. But it is plain that we have to live in a world of tension, forces pulling against each other, and that but for this strife, on which Heracleitus laid so much stress, we could hardly be moral or intelligent beings. In the spiritual life we can "ascend in heart and mind" to a higher plane of reality; but while we live here, "on our probation" as Christians say, we are combatants in the arena. As William Blake says:—

> "Joy and woe are woven fine,
> A clothing for the soul divine.
> It is fit it should be so;
> Man was made for joy and woe;
> And when this we rightly know
> Safely through the world we go."

Another expedient is to deny the reality of evil, which is said to be only negative, a *privatio boni*. We have mentioned the shallow assertion that all partial evil is universal good. We are reminded that a good picture contains shade as well as light, and it is suggested that what seems to us evil may enhance the beauty of the whole. This was urged by Soame Jenyns in his *Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil*, (1757): "The beauty and happiness of the whole depend on the just inferiority of the parts." The book is remembered now by the indignant protest of Dr. Johnson: "The author and Pope perhaps never saw the miseries which they imagine thus easily to be borne." There may, Jenyns thinks, be "numberless intermediate beings who have power to deceive, torment, or destroy us for the ends only of their pleasure or utility." Johnson replies: "Many a merry bout have these frolick beings at the vicissitudes of an ague,

[1] *God with us*, p. 50.

and good sport it is to see a man tumble into an epilepsy, and revive and tumble again, and all this he knows not why. As they are wiser and more powerful than we, they have more exquisite diversions, for we have no way of procuring any sport so brisk and so lasting as the paroxysms of the gout and stone, which must undoubtedly make high mirth, especially if the play be a little diversified with the blunders and puzzles of the blind and deaf."

Idealists who believe in an immanent Absolute have argued that evil needs only to be supplemented and rearranged, in order to take its place in the universal order. This theory is hard enough to believe when we consider the undeserved sufferings—not of ourselves but of others. But when we are asked to regard moral wickedness as the mere negation of good, such a notion is quite opposed to our experience. Pope's chosen villains, a Borgia or a Catiline, were not merely imperfect men. Some of the worst men—we may choose, if we prefer it, Nero, Ivan the Terrible, or Goebbels, have not been nugatory characters at all. Whatever a metaphysician may say, a moralist must admit that disvalues are as positive as values. This does not mean that the bad have no redeeming qualities. Perhaps none is utterly bad. "Wickedness is always human, being mixed with something contrary to itself," says Plotinus. "To step aside is human," says Robert Burns. The mystics, as is well known, are agreed that at the centre of the soul there is a "spark which never consents to evil." Even Tertullian, who was no mystic, agrees that "there remains the original good of the soul, which is akin to it and in the true sense natural. For that which is from God is not so much extinguished as obscured. In the worst there is something good, and in the best there is something of the worst." This however does not imply that "all will be saved at the last," a belief which is condemned by our Articles of Religion, but is very widely held now, since many Protestants have virtually changed hell into purgatory in which they profess not to believe. A man may lose his soul, but not the soul which would have been his if he had not been a bad man. The "bon Dieu" whose métier it is to pardon everybody is not the God of Christianity.

I am inclined to think that all the Greeks, including the Platonists, made too little of the evil of sin. Their word *hamartia* means properly a bad shot. Purification for them was like scraping off the dirt from a statue. The real self is sinless. The later Neoplatonists thought that their master Plotinus went too far here. "If the will sins," they asked, "how can the soul be sinless?" Mystical philosophy tends to an ultimate monism, and is in danger of reducing happenings in time and place to an unreal phantasmagoria. This may lead to an apparent heartlessness in contemplating such disasters as are now troubling the world. "What matters it? The actors change

their masks; that is all." Our wounds cannot be healed so slightly as this.

The "offence of the Cross," which is "foolishness to the Greeks," as St. Paul says, points to a partial solution of the problem. Vicarious suffering, not vicarious punishment, is a law of life. If God is love, He must reveal Himself in the supreme activity of love, in self-sacrifice. We do not fall into the error of "Patripassionism" when we say that the self-sacrifice of Christ was the act of a Divine Being. If the most sublime manifestation of the Divine nature in relation to His creatures is not power or justice but love, this must also be our ideal. Our religion, unlike most of the higher religions and philosophies, does not promise to make us invulnerable. Love often hurts. Love makes no claims for compensation; love offers itself willingly. Nor must we make any demands for individual justice from God. The Christian regards it as a privilege to "fill up, for his part, what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for His Body's sake." There is no thought here of a forensic transaction. Rather, we discard altogether the monadism which regards the self of our surface consciousness as a "windowless" entity, like the atoms of Lucretius, *solida pollentia simplicitate*. Personality is an ideal; the self-centred individual is not yet a person. Plotinus himself says that the indifference of the soldier to death proves that the soul knows itself to be immortal. I think this is true.

It is a hard lesson. Even the holiest may for a moment think that God has forsaken him, and more often that God has forsaken the world. But in communion with God we rise above these doubts—St. Paul, who had little enough to encourage him in the heroic enterprise which made him a greater conqueror than Alexander, could rejoice in the confidence that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh in us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things that are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Alfonso the Wise, of Spain, once said that if the Creator had consulted him he could have suggested several improvements in the world. A loud clap of thunder prevented him from putting his plans on record. The world that we know is certainly not the kind of place which we should have made if we had had the choice. But life "as it organizes itself apart from God"—Bishop Gore's definition of what the New Testament means by "the world"—is not reality as God sees it, and as His saints have seen it. We have free access to the world of eternal values, which are at least as real as the world of stars and atoms. We have faith, which is the resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis, a venture which justifies itself as we advance in the spiritual life. We have hope as an anchor of the soul,

hope, often disappointed but never killed, since no pure hope can ever wither except that a purer may spring out of its roots. And we have love, in which, as St. Bernard says, God reveals Himself directly and not merely symbolically, love which is stronger than death, and the hierophant of the divine mysteries. "Now we see in a glass darkly"; but we may rise, if we are willing to pay the price, *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem.*

DISCUSSION: (I) *Philosophy Without Science*

I. Viscount SAMUEL

The appeal is often made to our philosophers not to disregard the conclusions of natural science, when relevant to their discussions. Everyone agrees that this is sound in principle. But not everyone acts upon it in practice. I have lately been reading Prof. A. J. Ayer's book, *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*,[1] and have found it a striking example of the burden imposed on philosophy when matters properly belonging to physics and physiology are discussed in terms of logic and linguistics.

Prof. Ayer's treatise opens with a section entitled, "The Argument from Illusion." In an acute analysis, extending to over fifty pages, he recalls the many examples given by earlier philosophers to show that what we perceive are never "real" material things, but only "sense-data" within our own minds. Locke, Descartes, Bradley, and some contemporary thinkers are quoted. We are reminded of the straight stick standing half in water, which the eye sees as bent; the colours of leaves and flowers which may be different for one person and for another; the strange phenomenon of mirage; the case of a man whose leg has been amputated but who still sometimes feels a pain in its foot. Prof. Ayer treats these illusions, and the theory of "sense-data" based upon them, as matters for serious philosophic study. But if these and similar cases were given to a present-day scientist to examine, his answers would show at once that they give rise to no philosophic problem, and present no "argument." The whole of this ancient controversy fades away into nothingness.

As to the stick in water, the scientist could not fail to point out that the description is incomplete. We are not merely "looking at a stick." We are seeing half a stick through the medium of air, and the other half through the media first of water and then of air. Light-rays travelling from water to air are refracted; so that, while the stick is continuous, its image on the retina of the eye is discontinuous. The ordinary man, knowing little of light-rays, media and refraction, says that he sees a bent stick. When everyone becomes familiar with the facts about light transmission, no-one will give the matter a second thought.

We say that the quality of colour belongs to the leaves of a rose-bush, which are green, and to the flowers, which are red. But science tells us that those words—"quality," "colour," "green," "red"—are nothing more than convenient, and no doubt indispensable, means invented by us to describe or to account for our own sensations. They do not indicate anything that is in the object itself. What does reside in the object is the capacity to reflect certain wave-lengths of the spectrum of white light and to absorb the rest: the surface of the leaves of the rose-bush reflecting predominantly rays of the wave-length about 5,000 angstroms and the flowers about 6,500 angstroms.[2] (This would be the description in accordance with wave-theory; quantum-theory would express it differently.) When a normal human eye is in the path of a stream of these rays its receives impulses—through the retina and the attached nerves—which give rise to impressions in the brain that we term

[1] Published by Macmillan & Co., 1940.
[2] Or 1/20,000 and 1/15,400 of a centimetre.

"seeing something green," or "seeing something red." A "colour-blind person" —one whose ocular organ is abnormal—may not be able to distinguish between those two regions of wave-length; he is subject to the "illusion" that the leaves and the flowers are the same "colour."

Again, Prof. Ayer says that "when a man sees a mirage in the desert, he is not thereby perceiving any material thing; for the oasis which he thinks he is perceiving does not exist." But he *is* perceiving material things; only they are perceived in an unusual fashion—distorted or magnified or reflected. I have myself several times observed mirages in the deserts of the Middle East. The lakes that appear so realistic are reflections of the sky; and the supposed palms in the distance are magnifications of sparse groups of little stick-like plants, with tufted tops, in the foreground. Anyone who will take the trouble to read the page of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which deals with Mirage will find that such appearances are the consequence of abnormal heating of the sand, causing the neighbouring air to expand; so diminishing its density and altering its "refractive index." The reasons, with diagrams, are given for the astonishing phenomenon that results. Any traveller may see it whenever the special conditions of landscape and atmosphere are present.

Ask any physiologist how it is that a man can feel a pain in his foot although it had been amputated, perhaps years before: he will explain that, normally, certain nerve-threads, running from the foot through the leg to the spinal column, convey to the brain, when there is some injury, a sensation of pain; this pain the mind has learnt by experience to refer to the foot. After that nerve-thread has been severed by the amputation, any irritation that may occur higher up in the body, but along the same nerve-path, will give rise to a similar sensation; and the mind, wrongly but naturally, will continue to attribute it to a now non-existent foot.

It is not surprising that in pre-scientific times philosophers, grouping such mistakes together, should have founded upon them an "Argument from Illusion," and have built up a formidable metaphysical problem of "Appearance and Reality." But it is surprising that nowadays thinkers should continue a discussion that is obsolete.

In a later section of the book,[1] Prof. Ayer examines the question of "sense-data" in connection with sounds. But he does not stay to consider what sounds actually are. Had he taken as his starting-point the fact that a human voice-organ, or a musical instrument, or whatever it may be, is so constructed as to be able to set up rhythmical vibrations in the atmosphere, and that the human ear is so constructed as to receive those air-waves and to transmit corresponding sensations through appropriate nerve-fibres to the brain, he would at once have realized that to discuss the matter as a subject for philosophic reasoning is beside the mark. The word "sound" like the word "colour," does not describe anything actually extant in the objective universe. It is one of our verbal devices for summing-up the total effect of some purely physical events—a series of electro-magnetic radiations, or air vibrations, or the like—when combined with a receiving mind and the sensory apparatus that serves it. Let the radio be left on in a room with nobody there, and there would no longer be any "sounds" in the room, only certain air-vibrations. A dictaphone left there might make a record of the vibrations, but it would not "hear" them. In the same way, there are obviously no "sounds" in a telephone wire which is transmitting a conversation: intermittent electric currents travel along the wire and actuate the diaphragm in the receiver, reproducing there the sets of air-vibrations which have emanated from the human voice and

[1] Pages 252–58.

have actuated the transmitting diaphragm, and the ear senses the new set of vibrations.

Apart from the ear there are no sounds. If human beings, and all other organisms, were deaf, it is plain that there would be no sounds; and if blind, no colours. Probably nature has many manifestations for which we have no words, because we are not aware of them, having no sense-organs able to detect them, even with the aid of lenses and electrical and other appliances.

The scientific approach gives us a simple answer to another of the problems which have vexed abstract philosophers—whether "sense-data" are each of them private to a single observer,"[1] or whether they are "public." The scientist would say that the electro-magnetic radiations of light or heat, the air-vibrations of sound, the minute material particles conveying odour, the inter-atomic attractions which make things "solid," and the like—all these are there for everybody; they would still be there "When there's no-one about in the Quad." On the other hand, the sensations of a mind, through eye, ear, nose or finger, are individual. At the originating end the events are common and public, and the same for everyone. At the perceiving end they are personal and private, and may differ according to idiosyncrasy.

To quote one other example: in the course of a chapter on Causality and Perception, Prof. Ayer examines a proposition, put forward by the late Prof. G. F. Stout, that in order to explain "causality" it is necessary to bring in the notion of "active tendency." "The illustration that he (Prof. Stout) gives to show how he would make use of this notion is that of a stretched bow. 'We say that there is a tendency for the bow to unbend.' " From this Prof. Stout ultimately deduced "the conclusion that 'it is required that mind shall through and through enter into the constitution of nature.' "[2]

Prof. Ayer does not accept this thesis; but he rejects it only after several pages of respectful examination; meeting Prof. Stout on his own ground, recurring to Hume's ideas on Causation, and treating the whole subject as one proper for logical analysis. Yet is it not clear that the problem presented by a stretched bow is simply an inquiry as to the nature of elasticity? Many substances possess that property, in varying degrees. Wood is among them; as we may observe every time we see the branches of the trees swaying in the breeze. The problem, being one of molecular arrangement and attraction, is for the physicist and chemist, and not for the philosopher. It has, in fact, been exhaustively studied by industrial chemists, particularly in relation to the molecular composition of rubber. The outcome has been the invention of synthetic rubber. Would Prof. Stout have held that a band of rubber, natural or artificial, stretched round a bundle of papers, exhibits some metaphysical "tendency" to contract, which is to be accepted as evidence that "mind enters through and through into the constitution of nature?" The case of the stretched bow is no different. To speak of a "tendency in" the bow is sheer scholasticism—very belated three hundred years and more after Francis Bacon published the *Novum Organum*.

When the question is asked, Do we perceive material objects directly?—the answer therefore must be, Yes; if by these words we mean what present-day knowledge tells us that they should mean. Material objects, we now know, are systems of atoms, organized into molecules, which form gases, liquids or solids; capable of emitting or reflecting electro-magnetic radiations or air-vibrations, and of attracting or repelling one another. And perception means

[1] Ayer, *op. cit.*, p. 2. See also pp. 153–61.
[2] G. F. Stout, *Mind and Matter*: and "Mechanical and Teleological Causation," *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Proceedings*, 1935. Quo. A. J. Ayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 186–99.

that a mind is affected, whether consciously or unconsciously, by such material objects.

On all these matters Prof. Ayer appears ultimately to arrive at much the same conclusions as the scientific approach would have led to[1]—but at the cost of how much mental labour, after the fatigue of how many circuitous wanderings! It is surely a mistake to pay attention to the speculations of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers, and none to the discoveries of nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientists; to write on "The Constitution of Material Things" and "The Elementary Construction of the Material World," as if Dalton, J. J. Thomson, Rutherford, Max Planck, and Niels Bohr had had nothing significant to tell us on those subjects. It is as though astronomers of the Ptolemaic school, who had for centuries been engaged on immensely complicated calculations of the movements of the planets and the stars, based on the assumption that all the astral bodies were being carried by "spheres" which revolved around an immovable earth—as though they had persisted with such labours for centuries more, after Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler had proved that the assumption was false; that, in fact, the astronomer himself, with his mind, his eye, and his telescope, was being whirled around, relatively to the planets and stars, on a globe that revolved daily on its axis and yearly round the sun.

This line of approach brings us to the conclusion that the true dichotomy is not between appearance and reality, as the idealist philosophers have presented it; nor yet between ideas and matter. It is rather between the material universe as related to ourselves, and the universe not so related.

There is a single physical universe constructed of atoms and their constituents, radiations, and gravitational forces—that is, of energy. Our bodies are an integral part of it. For us the universe is full, for example, of "solid" objects: that is to say, it contains systems of molecules so closely coherent that they exclude other such systems—our bodies among them. Or, as commonsense says—more simply, "it doesn't do to run your head against a brick wall." Yet we may sit in a room listening to a self-contained radio set with no outside aerial, and we realize at once that the broadcasting rays are passing through the brick walls, so solid relatively to our bodies, almost as though they were not there. Whenever we draw back our curtains in the morning we see that the window-panes are both solid and not solid—solid for ourselves, or the birds or the bees, and not solid for light-rays. Indeed, during all the centuries that men have known the use of glass they have had the clue to the whole matter literally before their eyes, if they had only known.

If I am asked whether this is anything better than a philosophy of naïve realism, I would answer—it is realism, but not naïve realism. It is realism corrected by the observations and experiments, discoveries and verifications of science.

Yet this is not to assert that science is now able to give us an answer to the whole of our problem about perception. Far from it. Science, most helpfully, takes us part of the way—and then stops. It shows us (though indeed with some gaps in the explanation) sequencies such as—sun-rays, reflection of selected wave-lengths from the surface of objects, transmission through the eye, minute electric currents passing along the attached nerves, effects upon the cells in a particular area of the brain-cortex. Mind then takes over from brain. But what that last process is, science as yet can offer no explanation. It stops at the most exciting part of the story. It cannot even promise "Another thrilling instalment in our next number."

[1] For example, see *ibid.*, pp. 26, 57.

Sir Charles Sherrington, who has pushed exploration in this field farther than any man, in his great book, *Man on His Nature*,[1] says: "Reference to the brain at present affords little help to the study of the mind. Ignorance of the 'how' of the tie between the brain and the mind there makes itself felt. That is no fault of those who study the mind or of those who study the brain. It constitutes a disability common to both of them. A liaison between them is what each has been asking for. That there is a liaison neither of them doubts. The 'how' of it we must think remains for science as for philosophy a riddle pressing to be read. . . . So our two concepts, space-time energy sensible, and insensible unextended mind, stand as in some way coupled together, but theory has nothing to submit as to how they can be so. Practical life assumes that they are so and on that assumption meets situation after situation; yet has no answer for the basal dilemma of how the two cohere." And in his Rede Lecture, *The Brain and Its Mechanism*,[2] Sherrington was constrained to say, "Strictly, we have to regard the relation of mind to brain as still not merely unsolved, but still devoid of a basis of its very beginning."

As he says, philosophy can do no better. In the final phase in perception, when mind takes over from brain, you may say if you choose that mind is dealing with "sense-data" created for it by the percipient organs, including the relevant part of the brain. But to use that term does not appear to add anything or clarify anything.[3] It makes no difference, of course, to what is going on, and it brings us no nearer to an explanation. So long as this is so, it would appear that there is a second dichotomy to be studied. Not only are we obliged, by the requirements of our nature, to consider the material universe sometimes as it is relatively to ourselves, and sometimes as it exists—and has existed for untold aeons—irrespective of ourselves. We must also realize that there is a mental element, strangely mixed up with that material universe, but, so far as we can tell, not identical with it.

Philosophy certainly can find no answer to the brain-mind problem by going to the other extreme; by adopting the scientific approach with so much fervour as to believe, as an article of faith, that the solution is sure to be found some day in a perfected physics and chemistry. That is materialism—surely of all generalizations the crudest and least likely to be true. Watch a chess-player, cogitating for half-an-hour whether to move his queen here or his bishop there—is there any possibility that his reflections and decisions are the product merely of electric impulses and molecular combinations? Or consider the working of your own faculties as you read and think over a paper such as this: not all the Pavlov experiments on the flow of saliva in the mouths of hungry dogs will convince you that the opinions you may form as to its value or non-value are the outcome of conditioned reflexes. Biophysics and bio-chemistry may indeed help us on the way. But it is the Bios that is important here. And what do we mean by Bios?

> Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but *if* I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.

[1] Cambridge University Press, 1940, pp. 240, 350. [2] *Ibid.*, 1933, p. 32.
[3] Prof. Ayer agrees that it does not add, but thinks that it may perhaps clarify. (*Op. cit.* p. 57.)

PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT SCIENCE

II. Professor A. J. AYER

Lord Samuel takes me to task for writing a book on the philosophical problems of perception, without paying sufficient attention to the discoveries of modern physics. He thinks that these discoveries have made it unnecessary for philosophers to go on bothering their heads with questions of logical analysis. Let them go to school with the physiologists, and then devote their energies to the unsolved problem of the relation of body and mind.

My answer to this is that Lord Samuel has clearly failed to understand what the philosophical problems of perception are. In dealing with the argument from "illusion" for example, he assumes that the philosopher is puzzled to account for such phenomena as the appearance of the bent stick in water or the pain felt in an amputated leg, and he remarks, quite correctly, that the scientist has a satisfactory explanation for them. But this is not the point at all. The philosopher dwells upon these cases of illusion, not because he is at a loss to explain them, but because they are held to refute the philosophical theory of Naïve Realism. Whether they do refute it is a matter for discussion, and I have sympathy with those, like Lord Samuel, who find such discussion laborious. But the labour cannot be avoided by a mere appeal to scientific text-books. For the discoveries of scientists are themselves based upon sense-perception. If perception were not a source of knowledge, there would be no reason to believe in any scientific hypothesis. Now I agree with Lord Samuel that we are justified in accepting the scientific picture of the external world. But how we are so justified, and what this acceptarce logically involves, are philosophical questions of a quite different order from those that the scientist is concerned to answer. Lord Samuel makes the mistake of looking on the philosopher as an amateur scientist; and accordingly rebukes him for not having turned professional. If he did he would be able to give a much more up-to-date description of nature. But that is not his object. A philosophical "theory" of perception is not a theory at all in the scientific sense. It is not used in the same way as a scientific theory: it does not enable us to make any predictions that we could not have made without it. Its function is to bring out and evaluate the implications of the scientific account of the external world and of the common-sense account which, in trusting his instruments, the scientist presupposes. And since this is a question of logic and not of physiology or physics, I maintain that the proper technique for handling it is that of logical analysis.

The dangers of forsaking logic for physiology are well manifested by Lord Samuel's paper. He says of his own philosophy that "it is realism, but not naïve realism": but in fact it is not realism, and it is naïve. For I take it to be characteristic of any realist account of perception to hold that material things are directly perceived. And while Lord Samuel says that he holds this, he at once goes on to explain that what he means in this context by the word "directly" is "indirectly." According to him, the sounds and colours which we directly perceive exist only in our own minds: "the word 'sound' like the word 'colour' does not describe anything actually extant in the objective universe." Material things are "systems of atoms," and if we talk of perceiving them, what we must mean by this is that they "affect our minds" in a certain fashion. But this is to say that we do not directly perceive them. Our knowledge of them is, on this theory, wholly inferential: they are treated as the hypothetical causes of our sensations and it is held that our sensations do not themselves reveal to us the existence of an external world.

In short Lord Samuel holds a causal theory of perception. Except that he is more knowledgeable about the atom, his view is the same as that of the

seventeenth century philosopher, Locke, and it is open to the same objections. For what reason can he possibly have for believing in the existence of these physical causes which *ex hypothesi* are never themselves observed? If his senses inform him only of what is going on in his own mind what evidence can he have that anything exists outside it? The scientific theories in which he puts his faith are supposed to be verified by sense-experience: but if his interpretation were correct they would not be capable of being verified at all. Lord Samuel reproaches me with paying too much attention to the views of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers. But I think that he might have avoided some of the weaknesses of his own position if instead of stopping short at Locke he had considered the arguments of Berkeley and of Hume.

In rejecting the causal theory of perception, I do not wish to imply that the physicists and physiologists do not give a true account of the causes of our sensations. The question at issue is how their account is to be interpreted. And it is here that Lord Samuel seems to me naïve. For he assumes that science gives a strictly literal description of an external world: and then he finds himself with two worlds on his hands, a supposed external world of scientific objects which are made inaccessible to direct observation, and our everyday world of perceptual objects which is thrust back within the mind: and in this way he makes the question how we ever come to know the truth of any scientific proposition unanswerable. It is no wonder, therefore that he is perplexed by the problem of the relationship of matter and mind. But had he been less contemptuous of logical analysis, he might have seen that the acceptance of scientific hypotheses about the causes of our sensations does not entail accepting a causal theory of perception. These scientific statements are at a different logical level from common-sense perceptual statements, and at a different level again from statements about sensations. Consequently the sense in which they refer to "objects" is different. They do not refer directly to phenomena, but this does not mean that they describe a mysterious realm of scientific objects, literally existing "outside" phenomena. The world of the scientist is a rational construction, which furnishes a means of correlating phenomena, and the scientific account of the causes of our sensations is itself an instance of such a correlation. There is thus no problem about the relationship of different worlds, common-sense and scientific, or mental and physical, or whatever the dichotomy may be thought to be. All empirical statements refer ultimately to phenomena, but they refer to them in different ways. How they do so is a question for analysis. And it is this, rather than the compilation of a scientific encyclopaedia, that seems to me the proper undertaking of philosophy.

III. Professor HERBERT DINGLE

I have been asked to comment from the scientific point of view on the foregoing papers by Lord Samuel and Professor Ayer. I willingly do so, but I must say at the beginning that there is unhappily no unique "scientific point of view" on these matters, the philosophies of scientists being far more diversified than their practice. This, I think, is due less to considered differences of belief than to indifference to belief. The average scientist knows from his training how to go to work, and he does so competently and critically and produces results of value; but if he is asked what ultimate significance is to be attached to the results which he produces he either refuses to answer or else replies in terms of a naïve realism which he has acquired not from his science but un-

consciously from his ordinary everyday life. There are some exceptional scientists, indeed, who do seek to formulate the philosophy implied by their practice, but while the views at which they arrive show some measure of compatibility they still differ too greatly among themselves to justify the use of a phrase like "the scientific point of view." It should be understood, therefore, that the views I express here are in the last resort only my own, though I think they would be acceptable in the main to some other scientists as well.

The main purpose of Professor Ayer's book was to consider the question whether our knowledge of the "external world" should be expressed in terms of material things or of sense-data, and he reached the conclusion that this was entirely a matter of convenience; "material things" and "sense-data" were elements of two different languages between which a one-to-one correspondence could be established. If you choose the language of material things you are faced with the problem of showing how sense-data are related to them, and if you choose the language of sense-data, which Professor Ayer himself found the more convenient, you must then construct material things out of such data.

Lord Samuel maintains that the matters into which Professor Ayer is led in his discussion have already been settled by scientific inquiry, and that no useful purpose is served by treating them as Professor Ayer does. His answer to Professor Ayer's question would be that the external world consists of material things, whose structure science has largely revealed to us, and that sense-data are the effects produced in our minds by the impact on them of physical emanations from these material things. How sense-data (or our consciousness of sense-data—the distinction is negligible) arise from the arrival of the last physical impulse at the proper set of brain cells is still unknown. It is this problem, and not the obsolete one of the nature of the external world, that should chiefly engage our attention.

Professor Ayer replies that Lord Samuel's theory of perception has already been refuted by philosophers, and the problem of constructing a better one remains. It is that problem that concerns him, and while he is prepared to accept the scientific account of things he is not satisfied with a naïve interpretation of that account. He regards the scientific world as a rational construction which furnishes a means of correlating phenomena, not as a description of a mysterious realm of scientific objects literally existing "outside" phenomena. Consequently there is a question left over as to the logical relation between scientific statements, ordinary commonsense statements, phenomena and so on, and that is the question to which he addresses himself.

I confess that my preference would be to let the disputants fight the matter out to a conclusion while I stood by and cheered, but I have a promise to redeem so I will first of all state my conclusion and then try to explain it. It is that I agree with Lord Samuel that Professor Ayer has overlooked the relevance of scientific inquiry to his problem, and my ground for that view is that I hold Professor Ayer's interpretation of the scientific picture and not Lord Samuel's. I have already expressed my attitude to Professor's Ayer's book in a review of it,[1] and do not wish to repeat myself more than is necessary. I will therefore begin by suggesting that his view (expressed in his reply to Lord Samuel but not, I believe, in his book—at least, not so explicitly) that "the world of the scientist is a rational construction, which furnishes a means of correlating phenomena, not a description of a mysterious realm of scientific objects literally existing 'outside' phenomena"—which I accept—is in-

[1] *Nature*, 147, 286 (1941).

consistent with the conclusion of his book that the languages of material things and sense-data are, apart from convenience, equivalent.

In any rational argument we must proceed from evidence to conclusion; if the reverse also were possible the argument would be circular and therefore irrational. Now sense-data are evidence for material things, but material things are not evidence for sense-data. If I say, "There is a star up there," I can properly be asked for evidence; and if I reply, "I see a point of light, I hear my friend say that he also sees one, and when I photograph that region of space I see on the plate a small dark circle" (in other words, "I have certain sense-data") my statements are relevant, whether or not they are conclusive proof. But if I am asked for evidence for my statement, "I see a point of light," and I reply, "I see it because there is a star up there," my reply is not relevant because I can be immediately asked, "How do you know that there is a star up there?" and I can only give the circular answer, "Because I see a point of light." In short, we accept sense-data as primary, as data in fact, but we do not accept material things as data but as inferences (or constructions), which may be right or wrong (or useful or futile). Consequently Professor Ayer's conclusion that material things and sense-data are logically equivalent seems to me irrational. Whatever the relation between them may be it is uni-directional, irreversible, unsymmetrical—choose your own term. One must come before the other, and in a rational construction that one is sense-data.

If this be granted, we must regard all rational pictures of the "external world" as logical creations, and clearly various such creations are possible, between which—provided that they do, in fact, represent sense-data faithfully—our choice will be determined simply by the purpose for which we make them. Two dominate our thoughts at the present time, namely, what I may call the commonsense world and the scientific world. The commonsense world consists of material things such as chairs, stones, clouds, planets, nebulae, etc., distributed in space and enduring with a greater or less degree of permanence in time. The scientific world consists of electrons, protons, photons, sound waves, genes, the unconscious and so on, some of them eternally situated in various kinds of space. With these as ultimate constituents we build up our two worlds, and the world we work with on any given occasion is that most suited to our purpose on that occasion. If we are engaged in buying, selling, eating, drinking, playing, fighting and generally behaving as the highest of the apes, we adopt the commonsense world, and no one but an idiot would attempt to do otherwise. But if we are engaged in relating together as completely as possible the various sense-data that are our primary elements of consciousness, then the enormous success which the scientific movement has had in this effort, and the potentiality which it still appears to possess, indicate that we would be at least quixotic if at this time of day we adopted any world other than the scientific one.

I think that Professor Ayer might now agree with this, but my quarrel with his book is that in it he has not only adopted the commonsense instead of the scientific world when knowledge and not use is in question, but has also not recognized that the two worlds are so distinct from one another that the very meaning which we must attach to the word "sense-datum" is different in relation to the one from what it is in relation to the other. Before we can start to build the scientific world we must take sense-data in their most elementary form. Thus, the sense-data associated with what we call a piece of sugar are a white colour, a cubical shape, a weight, a hard feeling, and so on, and these, as primary data, are quite independent and distinct. But Professor Ayer's meaning of the word "sense-datum" in this connection would be something in which all these are combined—a complete representative, so to speak, of one per-

ception of the commonsense piece of sugar—and the way in which he constructs the sugar is to combine a large number of different perceptions—from different points of view, in different lights, etc., to use commonsense language—and extract something like the highest common factor. To this is given the name of a material thing, and it is regarded as a necessary element in every perception of the piece of sugar.

The scientific procedure is quite different. To begin with, it does not associate together the elementary sense-data involved in a perception of the sugar. On the contrary, it associates the white colour with other colours—the green of a leaf, the red of sandstone, etc.—into a field of study which it calls "optics," and it forms a conception of "light" as a means of correlating all the sense-data within that field. The cubical shape it associates with the round shape of the Earth, the conical shape of a tree-trunk, etc., into a field of study which it calls "geometry," and forms a conception of "space" as a means of correlating all the sense-data within that field. The weight it associates with the pressure of the air, the falling of rain, etc., into a field of study which it calls "mechanics," and forms a conception of "force" as a means of correlating all the sense-data within that field. And so on. The piece of sugar is not constructed at all, but all that went to the making of it is used more effectively (from the point of view of obtaining knowledge) in other ways. Perhaps the best-known example of this process is Newton's correlation of the downward motion of an apple with the elliptical motion of the Moon by means of the conception of "universal gravitation," the colour, shape, etc., of the apple and the moon having nothing whatever to do with the matter. All the conceptions so formed make up the scientific world, and in terms of these any particular sense-datum can be not only expressed but also related with any other in the same field of study, while still further research enables the initially separate fields of study to be amalgamated—as, for instance, mechanics with geometry in the theory of relativity.

When, therefore, Professor Ayer writes a book with the main purpose of resolving the philosophical problems concerning "our knowledge of the external world," and restricts his consideration to the relation between the commonsense world of material things and the not-inevitable associations of sense-data which make the construction of material things possible, he seems to me to be writing the play of *Hamlet* without the character of the Prince of Denmark. The commonsense world is merely the Bernardo of the play. It has served to introduce the problem to us, and should then fade out, for when we are engaged in knowing the external world rather than exploiting it there is no comparison between the effectiveness of the scientific approach, which in three hundred years has discovered so much, and that of the commonsense approach, of which the most imposing achievements during the preceding two thousand years were alchemy, astrology and the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. (I am speaking throughout, of course, only of the realm of sense-data, not that of other parts of our experience.)

I agree with Professor Ayer that he has a problem, distinct from that of the scientist, which is worthy of his attention. The scientist has to devise an external world that will represent the relations he finds between phenomena; it is not his concern to discuss the logical status of that world among the various concepts which the human mind creates, to estimate the scope and limitations of his method of procedure, or to pronounce on the implications, if any, of his findings in relation to human behaviour—to ethics, in a word. These are matters no less important than pure science, and they are matters with which the philosopher can properly be expected to deal. What can also be expected of the philosopher is that he should first acquaint himself with the true

character of the scientific achievement, and there is little evidence that he has done this. For one of the outstanding differences between the relation of percepts to the commonsense world on one hand, and that of elementary sense-data to the scientific world on the other, is that in the former there is, in the main, a direct relation between the material thing—a penny, say—and the various percepts of the penny, a relation which is quite independent of other percepts. We do not frame our concept of the penny to conform to percepts of the Hallelujah Chorus because the commonsense method of approach reveals no relation whatever between seeing a penny and hearing the Hallelujah Chorus. But in the scientific world things are entirely different. The concept of an electron is not related merely to percepts of an electron—it is, in fact, not related to them at all, because there are no percepts of an electron. It is related to sense-data in the fields of optics, electricity, magnetism, heat and so on, and the conception of an electron which a physicist holds is in part determined by phenomena in all these fields. In short, while the scientific world is derived from sense-data, there is, at the present advanced stage of development, no simple connection between a particular sense-datum and a particular scientific concept, and it is misleading to discuss the problem as though there were. It is necessary to take the scientific world as a whole and sense-data as a whole, and consider their relation comprehensively.

That this necessity is unappreciated even in the most enlightened quarters is shown in the clearest manner in Lord Russell's recent Henry Sidgwick lecture on "Physics and Experience." Unlike Professor Ayer, Lord Russell specifically takes the world of physics, and not that of commonsense, as his "external world," but he discusses it as though its relation to sense-data were the same as that of the commonsense world. He chooses, as an example, sound waves as the constituent of the physical world which corresponds to percepts of sound. Let me quote from my review[1] of that lecture.

> "It is undoubtedly right to say that the physical world is brought into being in order to account for the very dissimilar world of percepts, but it is much less accurate to say that a particular element of the physical world is brought into being in order to account for a particular percept. Sound waves were not postulated to account for hearing, for, in fact, they do not account for it any better than a hypothesis of sound particles would do. Sound waves are part of a much larger body of hypotheses formed to account for a much larger field of experience, including, for example, the connection between the 'velocity of sound' and the principal specific heats of the medium. If (as is by no means inconceivable since of the links in Lord Russell's causal chain from violin to percept the final one—from nerve disturbance to percept—is the one of which we know least, namely nothing) it should be found that the percept of hearing required sound particles rather than waves, we would not give up sound waves; they would still be needed to account for the specific heat relation, and we should probably picture something like particles carried by waves, as was proposed in the somewhat analogous dilemma concerning light. . . . The moral of all this seems to be that the construction or inference of the physical world from the world of percepts is such a complex matter, involving such an intricate network of connections, that the picking out of any single causal chain is highly artificial. Problems arising therefrom are arbitrary rather than inevitable. For instance, Lord Russell's original question: How can we infer from the world of percepts the very dissimilar world of physical objects? is at least a plausible problem, but the question: How can we infer from the

[1] *Proc. Phys. Soc.*, 59, 511 (1947).

perceptual Sun the very dissimilar physical Sun ? in so far as the dissimilarity of premises and conclusion is conceived as involving a difficulty, is not even that. At the first step, from percept to nerve disturbance, the resemblance is completely lost, and if there is a problem it is rather why the physical Sun ultimately arrived at should have recovered rather than lost so much resemblance to the percept. But it is hard to see what can be gained in any way by analysing the network into separate threads."

To sum up, then, I repeat what I said earlier, that I accept Professor Ayer's view of the general character of the relation between the "external world" and sense-data in preference to that of Lord Samuel. Nevertheless, in spite of his disadvantageous viewpoint, Lord Samuel has, I think, properly identified the weakness of Professor Ayer's treatment of his subject, which arises from failure to appreciate the significance of the scientific achievement in relation to the problem of "our knowledge of the external world." The acumen and clarity which are evident throughout Professor Ayer's work would, if properly directed, have given us a really valuable book.

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(It may be of service to readers to remind them that according to Professor Whitehead's theory there are two *modes* involved in perception; (a) Primitive causal efficacy, (b) Presentational Immediacy; and that in the normal perception of colours, sounds, tastes, etc., the two modes are fused. Before coming to a conclusion in respect of the problem of Perception, students are advised to consult Whitehead's book on *Symbolism*.—Ed.]

DISCUSSION: (II) *A Study of History*[1]

The present reviewer lacks an indispensable qualification for judging an abridgment: he has not read the original. I can only say that I should not have guessed this work to be an abridgment if I had not known it to be so, and that I was inspired with confidence in the editor's care, skill, fidelity, and understanding.

I propose to review the book as though it were an original, and I hope the author will forgive me if I am sometimes betrayed into judgments which a fuller acquaintance with his work would have caused me to correct.

It seems to me an illuminating book. I don't think anyone can put it down without feeling that his eyes have been opened and his understanding widened; and if I concentrate in what follows upon certain fundamental problems which it seems to me to raise (on the bony skeleton, rather than on the flesh and blood with which it is clothed) I hope I shall not conceal the wealth of instruction and enjoyment which it offers.

Mr. Toynbee has set out to write a natural history of civilizations. There have been twenty-one civilizations in the world so far and his object is, from a comparative examination of them all, to discover the laws, if there are any, which govern the growth and decay of civilizations in general.

The new and illuminating thing about Mr. Toynbee's treatment is that although he adopts this method of natural history, he avoids some naturalist assumptions with which it has commonly been conjoined. Thus, for example, his standpoint has much in common with that of H. G. Wells, who sees human history as the latest chapter in the story of the evolution of life on this planet; but Mr. Toynbee sees clearly that human history is something more than animal life, and cannot be understood in purely biological terms. Again, his method has obvious similarities with that of the anthropologist; but he recognizes (and this is the starting-point of his whole investigation) that the twenty-one civilized societies which have appeared in the world in the last 6,000 years are not merely so many further examples of the primitive human societies which must have existed during the whole 300,000 years in which there has been human life upon the earth, and which still persist on some parts of the earth's surface. Civilizations are a different species of human society from primitive societies, and exhibit their own peculiar properties and laws. Mr. Toynbee is thus immune from the error of describing civilizations as though they were really only different forms of savagery.

Mr. Toynbee asks what is the genesis of civilization. Having shown convincingly the insufficiency of certain pseudo-biological answers[2], he gives his own solution, from a clue presented by mythology. Civilizations are brought into existence by the response of a people to a challenge. The challenge may be that of physical environment (e.g. the Egyptiac civilization was a response to the desiccation of Africa), but it may also arise from external enemies or from internal social problems. A civilization comes into existence when a people responds creatively to a challenge. The creative response is not the only response adapted to secure biological survival. The primitive inhabitants of Egypt, faced with loss of their hunting-grounds by the progress of desiccation,

[1] A. J. Toynbee: *A Study of History*, abridgement of volumes I–VI by D. C. Somervell. Pp. xii and 617. Oxford University Press. Price 25s.

[2] Pp. 51–9, 67–8.

could retreat southward into the monsoon belt, and preserve their accustomed way of life by escaping the drought. Some of them adopted this solution, and it secured them survival so effectively that their descendants are living on the Upper Nile still, exhibiting to this day a social development probably unchanged since that early migration.[1] But the creative response was that made by those other Egyptians who moved their habitat into the Nile Valley, subdued the jungle-swamps by the works of man, and transformed their own way of life from that of hunters to that of cultivators. The Egyptiac civilization sprang from this response.

In a growing civilization a successful response gives rise to a new challenge, and a civilization continues in growth so long as each new challenge evokes a creative response. Breakdown of a civilization comes when the creative response fails.

Mr. Toynbee speaks of his empirical method, but like all empirical methods, it rests upon assumptions. Perhaps the most important task for a reader is to draw these assumptions to light and to consider their truth.

His story of the rise of civilizations is conceived as an epic of the achievements of man. Man is the hero of the story—Man the Pioneer, Man the Conqueror of Nature, Man the Creator. The progress of mankind is an adventure like that of scaling a steep cliff (pp. 49–50). Between the Lower and Upper Paleolithic Ages "sub-man succeeded in turning himself into man" (p. 197). Each civilization which has arisen thereafter has sprung from the striving of mankind to reach the goal of human endeavour. "The geneses of all civilizations . . . . could be described in the phrase of General Smuts: 'Mankind is once more on the move' " (p. 51). Cultures, arts, sciences, and religions are "feats of human prowess" (cf. p. 93).

The essential thing about Mr. Toynbee's presupposition is that it is humanist and not theistic. He avoids the narrowness of materialism, but he will not admit the supernatural. Professor C. H. Dodd has pointed out[2] that there is a likeness between Mr. Toynbee's interpretation of history, and that of the Old Testament prophets. According to the prophets also, God's manner of dealing with peoples is through the challenge of an historical situation. The result depends upon their response. But the difference between Mr. Toynbee and the prophets is that for him the challenge is presented by nature (or by undirected historical forces), for them it is presented by God.

His rejection of supernaturalism shows itself throughout Mr. Toynbee's account of the growth of civilizations. The role of creator is ascribed throughout to man, not to God. Sub-man, as we have seen already, "succeeded in turning *himself* into man." The whole of civilization is due to an activity of creation, but it is man who is the creator. Even mystics, though their importance is exalted (pp. 209–16) are valued as "creative personalities," not as persons who are in touch with the supernatural. Even the Bible, which purports to be a revelation of God, is valued as a creation of man (p. 86), and the development of the "particular conception of God which is common to Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam" is described as one of "three great feats which stand to the credit of the Syriac Civilization" (the other two being the invention of the Alphabet and the discovery of the Atlantic).

The question presents itself whether this denial of the supernatural can be maintained consistently. Thus, for example, the discovery of monotheism is described as a "feat of human prowess" (p. 93) and is ranked as an "immense discovery" (p. 263). But where is the prowess if monotheism is not true? If God does not exist, how is it an "immense discovery" to come to believe that he does?

[1] P. 72.

[2] *The Bible To-day*, pp. 126ff.

But if God does exist, how much must that picture of the Ascent of Man be redrawn? It is not, as Professor Hodges has shown in a penetrating pamphlet,[1] that we shall be called upon to reject any of the conclusions of physical science, or of the theory of evolution or of historical research. But if God made both man and the nature which man has conquered, if he both presented the challenges and equipped man with the resources with which he has been able to meet them, and has stood at man's elbow throughout the course of his struggle, then it looks as if there has been some naïve braggadocio in the story which man has told of himself. He is more truly to be thought of not as a pioneer, but as a child. According to the naturalistic view "man is a being of great intelligence and power; he explores nature, he makes himself, he is constantly reaching out into the unknown. But on a Christian view the context is wider. As man develops away from unreflective instinct he moves not into unknown territory, but towards a higher power which was there from the beginning, and from which all intelligence and power are derived. He is not so much a pioneer as a child learning to know his parent."[2] And if God created nature, man has been wrestling not only with nature, but in a sense with God also all the time. A child trying to negotiate haphazard impediments in its path is wrestling with nature; but if the impediments have been placed there by his parents to develop his resource, they serve as a point of interaction between their will and his.

It would be a false contrast to say that whereas the humanist attributes genesis and growth of civilizations to man's efforts, the Christian attributes them to God's effort. The Christian may well hold that all the civilizations which exist or have existed have been to a large extent products of man's own efforts and he may agree entirely with Professor Toynbee's account of their origin and growth. After all, it is the Christian doctrine that man has "usurped the place of God in an endeavour to order his own life after his own will" (W. Temple), i.e. that he has done exactly what Mr. Toynbee's account describes him as doing. He will differ from the Humanist in the way he judges their growth, and especially their subsequent disintegration. The Humanist thinks man is right to rely on his own efforts, and that he is fulfilling his true nature in his conquests and successes. When these give place to decay and failure, he is driven to the despair which is beginning to be the prevailing temper of our times. The Christian thinks that it is an error for man to rely on himself since he was made to rely upon God; and that all that he achieves by his own efforts will bear the marks of this fundamental error. All civilizations so far achieved come in this category. He does not therefore regard their destruction with quite the same eye as the Humanist. For the Humanist a decay of civilization represents a defeat of mankind when engaged upon his proper task; and it leaves him alone among the ruins in an alien universe. To the Christian it is the failure of an enterprise in which man's energies were misdirected; and it leaves him among the ruins, but still in God's hands, and perhaps nearer to the true goal for which he was destined.

Let us turn to Mr. Toynbee's account of the breakdown and disintegration of civilizations.

In a growing civilization the creative response has always been the work of a minority within a people. The masses conform by *mimesis*, subdued by the charm of the superior. Their conformity is not imposed by force, but adopted through attraction; which uncivilized peoples on the frontier also feel, and admire and imitate.

When the creative power fails, force takes the place of charm. The creative

[1] *The Christian in the Modern University*, pp. 11–13. University Pamphlets, S.C.M. Press.
[2] Hodges, op.cit. P. 12.

minority, no longer creative, becomes a dominant minority, and imposes its power upon the masses both within and without its borders. The masses feel themselves increasingly alienated, and come to form an internal and an external proletariat. The standard pattern of disintegration is a horizontal schism which splits a society into the three fractions of dominant minority, internal proletariat, external proletariat.[1] Each fraction then creates its characteristic institution: the dominant minority a univeral state; the internal proletariat a universal church; the external proletariat makes a hostile appearance as barbarian war-bands. The formation of a universal state represents a rally by the dominant minority to arrest the processes of disintegration (as the Roman Empire arrested the decay of the Graeco-Roman civilization). Hitherto it has never succeeded in arresting them more than temporarily (the Roman Empire succumbed at length to the sapping of its energies by the internal proletariat, which produced the Christian Church, and to the pressure of the barbarians upon its frontiers).

The same question which we raised before presents itself more strikingly when we consider Churches. Let us accept all that Mr. Toynbee tells us of their origin, that they arise when civilizations disintegrate, and draw their membership initially from those (the proletariat) who have ceased to feel the attractive power of the civilization. It will still make a great deal of difference whether we regard the church as a natural or as a supernatural society. If the former, then it is nothing but a sociological phenomenon symptomatic of decay. But those who hold that a Church is essentially a society related to a supernatural reality, though they may accept the account of historical origin, may give a different interpretation of it. They may say that peoples, like individuals, have commonly been found to turn to God when success in this world has been denied them, or has turned to ashes in their mouths. If this is so, then the Church, though it may arise from the disintegration fo a secular society, will be something more than merely a symptom of disintegration, and may have a value which the secular society missed.

I do not know where Mr. Toynbee would take his stand in face of this question. There are passages which seem to treat the church as a merely sociological phenomenon. The early Christian Church, e.g., is described as "the Syriac wing of the internal proletariat of the Hellenic world" (p. 452), Christ is a "Galilean Jewish prophet" (p. 485), and in the section entitled "The Sense of Unity" (pp. 495–505) it is explained how the belief in Monotheism arises as a psychological response to the phenomena of disintegration. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that this notion is really implied in Mr. Toynbee's initial conception of his task. To set out to write a natural history of human societies assumes that human societies are natural phenomena.

But statements in other places imply quite a different conclusion. In the same section last cited, there is a reference to "the profound and elusive *truth* of the unity of God" (p. 505. My italics). If the unity of God is a truth, then the development of monotheism is set in quite a different light; for whatever psychological and sociological causes may have co-operated in producing the belief that God is one, there will now be besides them another ground which must in some way have contributed to it, namely the fact that God is one. Further, a society or Church, which is based on a monotheistic belief, *if we grant that that belief is true*, can no longer be explained as a product merely of historical causes, for its belief brings it into relation with a supernatural reality.

Other passages, especially in the latter part of the book, tend to a similar

[1] P. 368.

conclusion. "The only society that is capable of embracing the whole of mankind is a superhuman *Civitas Dei*: and the conception of a society which embraces mankind and nothing but mankind is an academic chimera" (p. 496). "The Jews made the . . . . tremendous discovery of the existence of the Kingdom of God" (p. 522). (This idea is described as that of a Kingdom which "is not in time at all but is in a different spiritual dimension, and . . . . just by virtue of this difference of dimension, is able to penetrate our mundane life and to transfigure it") (p. 525).

These fragmentary excerpts do no justice to the passages in which the nature of religions, especially of Christianity, is treated with much penetration and it seems to me, with much truth, but they may perhaps illustrate the point of view from which these subjects are treated. This treatment implies a judgment about Churches quite different from anything which the beginning of the book prepared us for. It is not merely that the Churches are found to be creators of cultures higher than those attained by the secular civilizations, and must therefore be regarded as something more than phenomena of decay; it is that a Church is found to be in its essential nature not a creator of culture at all, but a society dependent for all the value that it has upon a real supernatural being. A monotheistic faith is not a cultural product, which entitles its holders to be ranked among creative civilizations; it is a recognition of truth, which puts its holders at once into relation with something they have not created.

Mr. Toynbee himself raises the question "whether Churches can really be comprehended in their entirety in the framework of the histories of the civilizations in which they make their historical appearances, or whether we have not to regard them as representatives of another species of society, which is at least distinct from the species 'civilizations' as these latter are distinct from primitive societies?" (p. 368; cf. particularly pp. 530–31 and ch. xxii), and defers its discussion to later volumes which are still to appear. It is premature, therefore, to canvass his final opinion on this topic. But I think it is clear that there has been a development in his views within the compass of the existing work, and that the earlier part would have been conceived differently if it had been written in the light of the later.

Mr. Toynbee seems to me to be at his subtlest and best in the long chapter XIX entitled "Schism in the Soul." He sketches there the alternative ways of behaviour, feeling and life which are developed in disintegrating societies as substitutes for the happy integration of soul which they enjoyed in the period of growth. The four alternative ways of life (pp. 505–30) are entitled Archaism, Futurism, Detachment, and Transfiguration. The first three are all attempts to escape from the present, Archaism into the past, Futurism (which includes all secular Utopianisms and is exemplified in the Jewish Zealots of New Testament times and in modern Marxism) into the future. They are both "attempts to break away from an irksome present by taking a flying leap out of it into another reach of the stream of time without abandoning the plane of mundane life on earth"; and they "resemble one another in being *tours de force* which prove, on trial, to have been forlorn hopes" (p. 515). The way of detachment is an attempt to escape from the mundane order altogether. It has been practised by the Stoic philosophers of the West and, more ruthlessly, by the ascetic disciples of Buddha in the East. This way also is pronounced to be a *cul-de-sac;* only the fourth way, that of transfiguration, leads right onward (p. 530). The way of transfiguration is a way of withdrawal indeed, but of withdrawal in order to return. It is the discovery of a kingdom, the Kingdom of God, which is "not . . . . a dream of the future, but . . . . a spiritual reality interpenetrating the present" (p. 529). Mr. Toynbee traces the development of this conception through the gradual recognition by the Jewish

people of the bankruptcy of Futurism, until it was finally realized in Christianity (p. 520–6).

Consideration of this passage seems to me to throw some doubt upon the method of investigation which the author began by adopting, and I should like to conclude by a few remarks on this point.

Mr. Toynbee set out to write a natural history of civilizations and to employ the methods proper to natural history. These are to distinguish the various species of the creatures to be investigated, and by examination of instances to establish the specific characteristics and general laws of behaviour of each species. The subject-matter of Mr. Toynbee's study being human societies, he distinguishes the two species, primitive societies and civilizations, and sets out to establish generalizations about the latter by investigating the behaviour of its instances. (He finds reason in the course of his study to distinguish a third species of society, namely Churches.)

The question is whether the method of generalization is appropriate to this subject matter. The first thing which may lead us to doubt it is that the instances of the species to be studied are so limited in number that they can be counted. In the natural sciences, in which generalization is normally employed, we are accustomed to expect each species to have an indefinite number of instances. Primitive societies, of which there must have been thousands, are numerous enough to make us feel that the method can be naturally applied to them; but we feel a certain premonition of oddity when it is applied to a species of which we have counted all the instances to date, and have found them to total twenty-one.

This oddity shows itself in a more striking form when we come to the disintegration of civilizations. For example, we have related how Archaism, Futurism, Detachment, and Transfiguration are presented as four alternative forms of reaction against a socially disintegrating world. If we are to remain true to our method, we shall regard these as four species of escape, and shall expect to find each exemplified in a number of historical instances. We do in fact find several instances of each of the first three, but of the fourth, transfiguration, it appears that there is one instance only, namely Christianity. Thus Mr. Toynbee, in describing the saviours appropriate to each type of escape, presents his conclusions in the form of general laws: "The saviour-archaist will try to reconstruct an imaginary past; the saviour-futurist will attempt to leap into an imagined future. The saviour who points the way to detachment will present himself as a philosopher taking cover behind the mask of a king; the saviour who points the way to transfiguration will appear as a god incarnate in a man." (p. 534). But in the profound short section in which this last alternative is treated (pp. 544–47), it appears that this law has received only one instantiation, namely in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. Are we to regard this as a general principle which for accidental reasons has had no more than one instantiation?

Further, the four methods of escape should be co-ordinate species, but are found to be related to one another in a different way than this; the first three, namely, are related to the fourth as the less perfect to the more perfect. "Three of them are *culs-de-sac* and . . . . only one, which we have called transfiguration, and illustrated by the light of Christianity, leads right onward" (p. 530). Mr. Toynbee's comparison of the different saviours, too, shows them as representing not merely different kinds of salvation, but different degrees of perfection. "This is in truth the final result of our survey of saviours. When we set out on this quest we found ourselves moving in the midst of a mighty host, but, as we have pressed forward, the marchers, company by company, have fallen out of the race. The first to fail were the swordsmen, the next the

archaists and futurists, the next the philosophers, until only gods were left in the running. At the final ordeal of death, few, even of these would-be saviour gods, have dared to put their title to the test by plunging into the icy river. And now, as we stand and gaze with our eyes fixed upon the farther shore, a single figure rises from the flood and straightway fills the whole horizon. There is the Saviour; 'and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.' " (p. 547). The saviours are not related to one another as different co-ordinate species of a general type, but as many, in varying degrees imperfect, to one perfect. This must affect the proper method of our comprehension, which will be no longer to elicit a specific type from consideration of particular instances; but rather to understand the imperfect in the light of the perfect (and conversely to gain a better understanding of the perfect from seeing the less perfect approximations to it—a thing which Mr. Toynbee's book is admirably adapted to help us to do).

Thus Mr. Toynbee himself quite thoroughly abandons the generalizing method of natural history when he comes to this stage of his work. But I can imagine a disciple of his who would be willing to surrender this later post-scientific phase of his master, and to justify his earlier method of generalization as applied to civilizations. "The appropriateness of the method," he might argue "is sufficiently proved by its success. Mr. Toynbee has in fact revealed most striking identities of pattern repeated in diverse civilizations; indeed they are so constant that tables can be constructed which exhibit their common structure. This being so, it is merely a verbal dispute to argue whether these similar instances can constitute a 'species.' What is a species, except a group of similar instances?"

I should sympathize with a great deal of this. I don't know what historians say about it, but I am sure no layman can read this work without being impressed by the recurrence of pattern which it exhibits in different ages and civilizations, (e.g. the pattern of Withdrawal and Return, pp. 217–40). But such recurrence of pattern may be indicative of other relationships than that of specific identity. Mr. Toynbee has given an example of this in his account of the saviours, who are related as forerunners to fulfilment. Mr. C. S. Lewis illustrates a similar relationship when he says: "In the Christian story, God descends to re-ascend. . . . In this descent and re-ascent everyone will recognise a familiar pattern; a thing written all over the world. It is the pattern of all vegetable life . . . . It is the pattern of all animal generation too . . . .Death and Re-birth—go down to go up—it is a key principle. . . . The doctrine of the Incarnation, if accepted, puts this principle even more emphatically at the centre. The pattern is there in nature because it was first there in God. All the instances which I have mentioned turn out to be but transpositions of the Divine theme into a minor key."[1]

I suggest that this notion may be extended from nature to history, and that recurrence of a similar pattern both in nature and in history may be a mark of what Mr. Lewis calls elsewhere the divine idiom. Similarly the works of an artist, throughout the various phases of his development from immaturity to his prime, will exhibit a certain recognizable identity of style throughout all variations. In virtue of this identity, these works *can* always be classed together as similar instances, and the common elements of their structure could no doubt be elicited and tabulated. But such a method of understanding would be less adequate than one which, mindful of the temporal order in the artist's production, traced the development of his style through the successive phases of his artistic life.

Similarly, although it may be shown to be possible to generalize about such

[1] "Miracles" Pp. 135–36.

historical phenomena as civilizations and Churches, it may still be true that this is a less than adequate method of understanding them. Suppose that the course of world-history is not, as the natural historian assumes, the unfolding of an indifferent, homogeneous, temporal back-cloth, against which specimens of civilizations are exhibited in an indefinite recurrence; suppose it is something more like a drama, which has had a beginning and a climax, and will have an end. In the latter case the various episodes will indeed exhibit a specific likeness to one another, since they will bear the marks of the same author's handiwork; but for their adequate comprehension something more will be needed, they will need to be understood in the light of the development of the plot.

The analogy of drama is in one respect a dangerous one. It suggests that the plot of history can be rendered lucid to the reason; that all that happens could ideally be seen to have its own necessity in the light of an intelligible theme; that the apparent contingency of historical fact is due only to the defect of our understanding. This view gives rise to those rationalizing "Philosophies of History," which are as suspect to professional historians as they are alien to Christian doctrine. But if we discount the analogy where it is false, if we insist that history is history and not drama, it may still be true that historical time falls into periods in a way analogous to that in which a drama falls into acts. It may still be true that the Incarnation forms such a turning-point that all that has happened after it belongs to a fundamentally different period from what happened before, (namely to the period between the Resurrection and the Second Coming).

Mr. Toynbee dismisses this as an absurdity in his early pages. "This dichotomy of historical time" (sc. into B.C. and A.D.) "is a relic of the outlook of the internal proletariat of the Hellenic Society, which expressed its sense of alienation from the Hellenic dominant minority by making an absolute antithesis between the old Hellenic dispensation and that of the Christian Church,[1] and thereby succumbed to the egocentric illusion, (much more excusable in them with their limited knowledge, than in us), of treating the transition from one of our twenty-one societies to another as the turning-point of all human history" (p. 38).

I think it safe to say that what Mr. Toynbee rejects as absurd is not especially the notion that the Incarnation should be the turning-point of history, but the notion that history as a whole should have a turning-point at all. But why is it absurd? It seems to be so only if you start with the opposite assumption, that of the natural historian namely, which seems to imply the homogeneity of time and its indifference to the phenomena occurring in it. But I am out of my depth and am unable to state the problem clearly. I will end by uttering two suspicious which I cannot substantiate. The first is that Mr. Toynbee has imported from the sphere of science an assumption which has now been superseded within science itself. The method which he professes is not only that of a natural historian but of a pre-Darwinian natural historian. The second is that in the passage about the Saviours which I have quoted earlier, he has himself moved implicitly to a different point of view.

M. B. FOSTER.

[1] It is not relevant to the argument, but surely this is an error of fact. According to Christian belief the coming of Christ marks the division between the dispensation of the New Testament and that of the Old Testament, not between the Christian and the *Hellenic* dispensations.

PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

The crisis of the war, and of the values heightened by the war, is beginning to make itself felt in Italian philosophical thought. In a recent book by Antonio Aliotta[1] we see contrasted two modes of logic, and, depending on these, two ethics. The logic of abstract intellectualism, which is the logic of the natural sciences, is a construction that takes its rise from the instinct of conservation and the will to exercise power over things. From such a point of view individuality is of no importance: the things of nature are of equal value if they can satisfy certain of our needs in equal measure. This logic is doubtless legitimate if it is applied to things as interchangeable means, homogeneous in their instrumental utility. But the chain of means cannot be continued to infinity; a halt must be made at an end that has value in itself, and with regard to which alone there is sense in speaking of means. Just such an end is the personality, which is irreplaceable in value, and cannot and ought not to be treated as a thing.

Now, for the individual a different logic from that which derives from the will to conservation and to power is appropriate, and, according to Aliotta, it is the logic of sacrifice. This sacrifice is in the very essence of life, which goes ever beyond the individual towards a higher unity: it does not aim at its own conservation, but transcends it in the direction of the conquest of a higher form of life, which is realized through suffering and death. Sacrifice is not understood as an absolute annihilation of the individual in universal being: the logic of life is not indeed the logic of abstract identity. The higher forms are not realized by erasing the individuality of the lower organisms, but by making them participators in a higher life. That which dies is the egoistic being, the living for self of the individual, but the individual survives as an element in a vaster whole.

For the logic of quantity sacrifice is diminution of being; but in reality it is the conquest of a greater spiritual wealth, as is taught by Christianity, which, in the humbling of the individual in his surrender of himself, sees his elevation and enrichment. The will to power is betrayed in the spiritual poverty of an ego incapable of escaping from itself; it may deceive itself with the illusion of enlarging its dominion, but the value of the personality and of the end to which that power is directed remains qualitatively unchanged, however much the material domain may be increased. In sacrifice, on the other hand, the ego issues forth from its closed circle; its life-beat is multiplied in a thousand harmonious vibrations.

On sacrifice Aliotta seeks to base a complete ethic and a philosophy of religion. In order to support so vast a construction the idea of sacrifice naturally needs to be amplified, and the author in fact enlarges it to the extent of understanding creation itself as an act of sacrifice. God does not choose egoistically to enclose and exhaust in Himself all being and all power (in the quantitative sense) but limits His own being and His own power, in order to leave a possible domain for conquest by his creatures. Perfection does not exclude, rather it implies, the suffering of sacrifice, as the divine incarnation shows us.

[1] A. Aliotta, *Il sacrificio come significato del mondo*, Perrella, Rome, 1947, pp. 176.

Aliotta develops very profound considerations about this central nucleus of his thesis; nevertheless they do not succeed in making the mind of the reader oblivious to the fact that the basis of the whole edifice is too narrow.

What influences has philosophy undergone through the profound revolution that has been accomplished in the last few decades, and which is still in progress, in the field of the natural sciences and particularly of pure physics? This problem, which absorbs equally scientists and philosophers, is the subject of a small but compact volume by Antonio Carrelli, professor of physics in the University of Naples.[1] At the heart of his essay are the problems of quantum physics, of which the current solutions revolutionize the old deterministic conception of the world to which the science, and with it the philosophy, of the nineteenth century had accommodated itself. The principle of indetermination is, in particular, that which to-day most demands the attention of philosophers in as much as it demolishes one of the barriers that the philosophic tradition had created between the subhuman and the human worlds. Another barrier is that which epistemology had raised between the subject and the object of consciousness; and even in this barrier a breach is made by the quantum theory of the present day which shows that, in the microscopic grade, the subject influences the object by the very fact of observing it. We are therefore in the presence of an interdependence and relativity very different from that of traditional epistemology, which assumed the subjective origin of sensible qualities. Here, on the other hand, it is a question of the modification of the objective structure of atomic complexes, by the active intervention of the subjective instruments of observation.

Other philosophical revisions are necessitated by the new physical doctrines of space and time; still others by the final antinomy in which science contends between the wave theories and the corpuscular theories, neither of which succeeds by itself in giving a complete interpretation of the universe, though in their very opposition they necessarily alternate.

But, in spite of these recognitions, the conclusion to which Carrelli's book finally comes is that the fundamental lay-out of the great philosophical problems is not radically altered by the new orientations of the physical sciences. The successes obtained, he says, ought not to lead to mistaken intellectual positions. More cannot be obtained from science than science is able to give, and if the results are extremely important from a practical point of view they do not provide a solution of the fundamental problem, which we must always rediscover within. There is no element in this development of thought to modify the classical scientific process; it is only a somewhat more complicated science, but the process remains the same.

The reason for the limits that Carrelli assigns to the philosophical validity of the new scientific concepts lies in the fact that he attributes to science a pragmatic character, that is purely "economic," that leaves unprejudiced the ultimate meaning of things. But it seems to me that this view is in conflict with the partial conclusions which I have already indicated, which show that the results of scientific investigation, especially those of quantum physics, have a profound bearing on the very nature of things. On this account there would seem to be more coherence in Eddington's conception, which distinguishes the purely structural interpretation, given for example by the doctrine of relativity, which does not go beyond the limits of an "economic" description of reality, from the quantum interpretation, in which can be seen an effort by science to penetrate into the inner nature of things.

[1] A. Carrelli, *Limiti e possibilità della scienza. Considerazioni filosofiche di un fisico*, Bari, Laterza, 1947, pp. 133.

Finally, I bring to the notice of the English public a recent translation into Italian of the *Enneads of Plotinus* by V. Cilento.[1] Of the two volumes of which the complete work will consist, the first has been published, which comprises the first four Enneads, preceded by the life of Plotinus written by Porphyry. The work is important, not only for the accuracy of the translation, but also for the copious critical apparatus with which it is accompanied.

GUIDO DE RUGGIERO.

(*Translated from the Italian by Beatrice Allen.*)

[1] *Plotino, Enneadi, prima versione integra e commento critico*, by Vincenzo Cilento, Laterza Bari, 1947 pp. xvi, 461.

NEW BOOKS

Corrigendum.—Readers are asked to note that in the review of Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy, and Its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, in the last issue of PHILOSOPHY, by Professor C. D. Broad, reference to the English edition of this book was inadvertently omitted. Messrs. George Allen & Unwin have asked us to state that they are the publishers of this book throughout the world (ex. U.S.A.), that their edition was issued over twelve months ago, and that a reprint of over 30,000 copies has recently been distributed to booksellers.

Creative Man. The Romanes Lecture 1947. By the RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT SAMUEL, G.C.B., G.B.E., D.C.L. (Oxford University Press. Pp. 30. Price 2s.)

This lecture, in consistency with the tradition of the Romanes Lectures, is addressed to a wide public. Touching on some of the main ills of the present time, it centres attention on the misuse of imagination. The writer shows, with a wealth of examples ranging from primitive animism to the superstitions and political mythologies of recent times, how prone we are to delude ourselves by hypostatizing abstractions. The most important examples are the teaching that the State is a "real entity" over and above the wills of its individual members, the personification of History and the submission of our lives to some "undefined supernatural force" or over-riding Destiny, and the notion of an Economic Man, the latter being put forward originally as fiction and coming "to be treated as actual." Some of these fictions have their uses, but many have nothing to compensate for the confusions they engender, and they lead to grave disaster. "In religion, in philosophy, in politics, there is nothing more dangerous than a 'fable that hardens into a dogma,' or an illusion masquerading as an ideal" (p. 17).

This warning is extremely timely. But one wishes that the author could have made some reference to theological dogmas, such as the doctrines of the Fall and of original sin, which afford peculiarly telling illustrations of the main theme of the Lecture. The omission is all the more remarkable because the ideas of "universal sin" and the guilt of "man" in which all participate independently of any individual action is the cause of grievous confusion, not only in religious thought, but also in ethics and politics. They are also among the outstanding causes of the despair which Lord Samuel singles out especially as the main obstacle to the bold undertakings for which our present situation calls.

More serious than this admission is the proneness of the author to carry his point too far. He very properly objects to the notion that there is some Goodness or "The Good" distinct from particular good actions or good experiences. But that is no warrant for concluding that "values are human inventions." For all that the author shows to the contrary, the goodness which qualifies particular acts and experiences may be quite objective. Likewise, in denouncing the view that Space is an "entity," Lord Samuel is apt to suggest, although I am not sure that this is his real intention, that Space and Time are "purely mental concepts" and "not real elements in the universe."

On its more constructive side, the Lecture offers, in very brief outline, a theory of value based on "the elementary proposition that men in general desire their own welfare" (p. 23). Welfare "is built up from many interconnected elements," and experience teaches us what they are. "Experience shows that health is better than disease, comfort than penury, knowledge than ignorance," etc. But it is highly questionable whether experience can do this apart from independent judgments of value; nor is it easy to believe that a sufficient reason why men "should do right when to do wrong is pleasanter" may be found in sanctions imposed by society and "the pressure of public opinion." One doubts also whether such a view affords adequate protection to the individual. Does not Lord Samuel tend to revert surreptitiously to the oppressive theories which he himself deplores, when he concludes that "the creativity of man culminates in the Moral Law" (p. 25)?

But in raising these objections we must not be thought to stint our praise for the achievements of this important Lecture in respect of the more critical matters which are its main concern. H. D. Lewis.

The Basis of Criticism in the Arts. By Stephen C. Pepper. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 1945. Pp. 177. Price $2.50).

Professor Pepper's book (composed of lectures given at Harvard, with an Introduction and a Supplementary Essay) is twice welcome. It offers to the art-critic a "reason of the hope that is in him"—a too-often blind hope that his criticism is something more than a subjective impression. And it helps the British philosopher—if the British philosopher will inform himself of this important subject—to see how a comparative study of critical aesthetic judgments can reveal the general metaphysical assumptions on which they are based, and can also reveal, perhaps, their need of fresh criticism, revision or reconstruction. This last, however, will have to be worked out by philosophers themselves (if so minded) for it is the application of philosophy to criticism which is the author's main aim.

This does not mean "the objectionable 'aesthetics from above' decried by Fechner." Of two evils, sheer impressionistic criticism is far less objectionable (it is at least facing empirical facts) than regulation-by-order emanating from metaphysical bureaucrats. But that impressionistic criticism can stand by itself is as much self-delusion as is the repudiation of all metaphysic by positivists. One must pre-suppose, and what one selectively perceives is determined partly by one's pre-suppositions. It is better to acknowledge pre-suppositions, to face them, to think them out and relate them to the empirical field, than to deny and repress them (which can cause, one observes, a whole ferment of chilly emotions). This thinking is metaphysics, and Professor Pepper, staunch empiricist though he is, is not afraid of them. The Professor is an empiricist; the definition of what is and what is not aesthetically valuable, is to be discovered only through constant consultation with competent and expert judgment, and if a definition does not fit this it must be modified or abandoned. Yet, the empirical aesthetic material once so defined (the author gives an interesting account (pp. 27–35) of the bearings of different types of definition), one's attitude to it will inevitably be affected by what Professor Pepper calls a "world hypothesis."

The *Introduction* refers to the four most considerable "world hypotheses" described in Professor Pepper's earlier book of that name. They are labelled *Formism, Mechanism, Contextualism, Organicism.* The first is derived from Plato and Aristotle: in aesthetics it stresses *normality*. Mechanism, of which Santayana is the best-known representative, puts first *pleasure* enjoyed within

the organism. *Contextualism*, the youngest of the hypotheses, as expounded by James, Pierce, Schiller, Bergson, Mead, Dewey, which is "operationalism in science, instrumentalism in logic . . . objective relativism in ethics and social theory," means in aesthetics that the more vivid and extensive and rich the intuition of *quality*, the greater its aesthetic value is. *Organicism* is objective idealism and its application to aesthetics was made in what Professor Pepper regards (most justly in my opinion) as a masterpiece—Bosanquet's *Three Lectures on Aesthetic*.

We are faced with an obvious difficulty at the outset. The four world hypotheses are *different*, and in important respects contradictory, hypotheses: how then can we get a single standard of criticism? Why not four? The answer is possibly severalfold. We can't help it, it might be much worse; the four world hypotheses are attempts to think connectedly about *all* the empirical evidence—so that in spite of fundamental metaphysical disagreements, there is a wider and better basis for criticism here than in mere *ad hoc* judgments. Again, the hypotheses are *hypotheses*, and challenging differences in their aesthetic implications might lead to their restatement and perhaps synthesis. Again, since the hypotheses are not final, it is quite legitimate to take what we can get of the several criticisms based upon them, emphasising different aspects, and to put them together. This is very effectively done in the final lecture, from which any critic, especially a literary critic, may learn much. Professor Pepper here applies each of the four methods in turn to two poems—one the sonnet of Shakespeare beginning:—

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"

the other a sonnet of Hopkins:—

"I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day."

The mechanist's evaluation will be in terms of the pleasures of the senses (sound, rhythm, etc.), of association, of design, of pattern, of recognition of the familiar types. To these the *contextualist* will add the vividness of quality which makes them important in the poem. The hedonistic mechanist, for example, may shrink, wrongly, and because it contains unpleasant bitterness, from the *quality* of irretrievable loss in the line:—

"For precious friends hid in death's dateless night."

Or Hopkins' poem may be judged bad by the mechanist because it contains much that is obscure, repelling and unpleasant. By the contextualist's standards these attributes are a positive help in the expression of the quality of torture of a religious soul at the midnight hour. The *organicist*, on the other hand, has much to say upon ideas (e.g. money and debts in the Shakespearean, judgment and witness in the Hopkins poem) vowel-sequences, etc., which *integrate* the poem. Finally, the *formist* asks, How well does it represent its culture? Does it fulfil its *genre?* How satisfying is it to the fully developed, highly discriminating man? *His* judgment on the two poems is that Shakespeare succeeds in these things whilst Hopkins fails.

The final criticism must be an inclusive one. On all four views Shakespeare's poem is superlatively good. Only on the contextualist view is Hopkins' so. Now though we cannot reduce criticism to numerical units or assess it by votes, the practical critic who is well-informed enough to include all these criteria, will hold them together and direct them discriminatingly upon the work. Add to this the facts—made clear in a really admirable Supplementary Essay on the "aesthetic work of art"—that there is a physical continuant in all arts except perhaps the dance, that men have similar biological constitutions, that works

of art are made and enjoyed within a common culture, that aesthetic judgment is "founded" or built up from a consecutive series of perceptions, that there is a "convergence" effect among the perceptions of many different subjects, and we may conclude that the aesthetic work of art or the work as maturely perceived, is not a mere private affair and that very considerable objectivity of judgment may be achieved.

We must, however, keep clear a distinction between the judgment of aesthetic perception (a judgment of fact as to what the perceptual content actually is), and the judgment of aesthetic value. About the first there may be very wide, discriminating, agreement. Yet, assuming such agreement on the matter of fact, there is likely to be divergence about value. It is upon the values rather than the facts that "world hypotheses" have bearing,—though opinion about values may also affect perceptual judgments of fact (the organicist will, e.g., criticise the hedonistic mechanist for failing to perceive that dissonances "are actually transformed by integration into the meaning of the whole"). An objective idealist is bound to have a different idea of "importance" from a mechanist's.

Even so, there is an enormous stride forward from the welter of subjectivist art-criticisms. Philosophers may disagree, but we can see pretty clearly where the broad differences lie, and in relating critical divergence to these underlying philosophies, Professor Pepper deserves our warm gratitude.

The chief trouble lies in the pluralism. Here are four bases, not one basis. Yet even here, if the (aesthetically) critical implications of a metaphysic can be shown to be compatible, or not compatible, with experienced aesthetic judgment, it is thereby so far verified, or shown, perhaps, to need modification. The forging of this link between metaphysics and criticism can help to strengthen both.

LOUIS ARNAUD REID.

Puritanism and Democracy. By RALPH BARTON PERRY. (New York: The Vanguard Press. 1944. Pp. xviii + 688. Price $5.00.)

The theme of this book is the religious and intellectual foundation of the civilization of the United States of America. It is, and is intended to be, a book for the times. It was written during the war; its background is the scepticism which since the beginning of this century has been corroding American ideals; and, in effect, it is a reasoned reassertion of the creed of America. But its genuine learning and the quality of its reflectiveness make it something more than a mere *livre de circonstance*. Indeed, there can have been few occasions when a philosopher of high repute has more profitably turned his mind to the needs of his generation and has produced a book so illuminating and so much to the point.

Puritanism and Democracy are, for Professor Perry, the two systems of ideas which united to determine, not the whole, but a large part of "the distinctively American tradition, culture, institutions, and nationality." The first is "the creed of certain Englishmen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries;" the second is "the creed of certain colonial Americans who waged a war of liberation, and created a new political constitution, at the close of the eighteenth century." Both have their roots in European culture.

The plan of the book is straightforward. The first of the three parts into which it is divided is mainly historical. Puritanism and Democracy as historic systems of ideas are examined and their contribution towards the "making of the American mind" traced in detail. The Puritanism with which Professor Perry is concerned is not merely the doctrines which are peculiar to the Puritans, it is the whole complex system of ideas which had its roots in

mediaeval Christianity. And the Democracy with which he is concerned is "the political and social creed which was the professed ground of the American Revolution of the eighteenth century," a creed which derived from the philosophy of the Enlightenment. But the first part is only an introduction to the real theme of the book, which is a long and elaborate analysis and appraisal of both Puritanism and Democracy in the American tradition. The spirit in which this is undertaken is indicated in the following passage:

> "Puritanism and Democracy, under these or other names, form a substantial part of the heritage of Americans. The chief source of spiritual nourishment for any nation must be its own past, perpetually rediscovered and renewed. A nation which negates its tradition loses its historical identity and wantonly destroys its chief source of spiritual vitality; a nation which merely reaffirms its tradition grows stagnant and corrupt. But it is not necessary to choose between revolution and reaction. There is a third way—the way, namely, of discriminating and forward-looking fidelity."

Here Professor Perry appears not merely as the historian of a tradition, but as a critic with a keen eye for its shortcomings. Yet, as he expounds it, the tradition itself is seen to have a certain power of self-criticism; while Puritanism and Democracy often re-enforce one another's errors, they also correct and complement one another's limitations.

There is in these pages, which compose the bulk of the book, much to admire and little to regret. Their outstanding merit is that, whatever one may think of the conclusions, one becomes certain as one reads that Professor Perry will waste no time before getting to the essential topics to be considered and will argue his point of view with lucidity and enthusiasm.

One matter of some importance may perhaps be remarked upon. In his analysis of what may be called the philosophy of American democracy (the central argument of which is contained in a chapter called "The Supremacy of Reason and Conscience") the whole emphasis is placed upon its generation from the optimism of the philosophy of the Enlightenment—the confidence that from tolerant discussion "the truth would emerge and prevail on its own merits," the confidence in human reason. Historically, no doubt, there is considerable evidence for this view of the generation of democratic theory. Nevertheless I think it is a mistake to identify democratic theory with optimism of this sort, and even historically it is a view that needs to be corrected by a recognition that much that is characteristic of democracy is a reflection of scepticism (doubt not only concerning the power of human intelligence to arrange a satisfactory state of society, but also concerning the whole idea of a permanently good society) rather than of intellectual optimism.

MICHAEL OAKESHOTT.

Works of Love. By S. KIERKEGAARD. Translated from the Danish by David and Lillian Swenson. (Oxford University Press. Pp. xiv + 317. Price 18s. net.)

It is generally held that there can be a duty to do an act, but not to do it from a certain motive. Then how can love, if it be a way of feeling, be also a duty? Does "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" make sense as a categorical imperative? Perhaps no one has quite answered this; but in the "Reflections" collected together in this book, Kierkegaard adds his testimony to that of others within the Christian tradition who have described a kind of love which is not primarily a way of feeling and quite different from romantic

passion, but which has its roots in *conscience*, religiously interpreted. But to love one's neighbour "as a matter of conscience" does not mean just coldly to do him good out of a sense of duty. It means seeing him as a person, to be respected in his mysterious separateness from ourselves, and yet as our equal "before God." We may go on and ask whether, if we respect another in this way (seeing him, in Kantian terms, as "an end in himself") it necessarily follows that we are moved by outgoing good will and affection towards him. "Thou shalt *love* thy neighbour as thyself." As a fact of experience, with some people at any rate, it seems to happen so, and this is impressive. But it does not seem to be entailed, and Kierkegaard does not discuss this. He does however bring out that love needs to be grounded in the kind of objectivity and respect for another person which is expressed in the idea of duty. "Only when love is a duty, only then is love eternally secure," whereas romantic and passionate love is notoriously insecure, and can even pass ambivalently into hatred. "And because man, even in relation to the beloved woman, is primarily her neighbour, and she is primarily his neighbour, therefore both he and she must be asked severally" (i.e. in the marriage service) "whether they have consulted with their conscience. . . . Primarily your wife must be your neighbour; the fact that she is your wife is then a closer definition of your special relation to each other. But that which is at the foundation of the eternal must also lie at the bottom of every expression of the special."

Kierkegaard's voluminous writings are the outpourings of a lonely genius, who seems to have felt the need to try to say what he had to say over and over again in different ways. But those who are not deterred by his repetitiveness and occasional perversity will find some penetrating remarks in this book concerning that familiar, but after all rather strange saying "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

DOROTHY M. EMMET.

Wisdom and Responsibility. By WALTER FALES. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. vii + 166. English price 14s. net.

A good deal of profound and original thought is packed into this slender volume. Mr. Fales writes in a pleasant, scholarly style and his work is obviously the product of a mature and capable mind. His main contention is that all thought and action is governed, consciously or unconsciously, by what he calls "final ends." These are felt as "responsibility," a term which appears to include such various compulsions as the urge to self-preservation and the obligatory force of duty. Mr. Fales seems to avoid positing any strictly non-biological ends, whether as "emergents" or as the result of another order of being manifesting itself in human behaviour—what might be expressed (to use Platonic modes of thought) as the functioning of that part of the human personality which belongs to the world of reality. Mr. Fales devotes a good deal of space to "values" and the function of evaluating in the processes of human behaviour but it is not easy to discover his idea of the nature and origin of values nor of their relation to the final ends. Thus, the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty can hardly be called a biological end, but I think Mr. Fales would include these values among his final ends, as motivations of human action and thought.

The chapter dealing with the process of learning is one of the best in the book. The author shows how any increase in knowledge pushes the frontiers of the mind further into unknown country, thus bringing with increase of knowledge a corresponding increase of ignorance. He recognises the function of "intuitive thinking" in learning, that flash of inspiration where analytical

thought gives place to a synthetic act of the mind in which data are seen as a "whole" and the intellect takes hold of a new concept. There is much in the book reminiscent of Gestalt psychology.

Mr. Fales is least successful when he grapples with the idea of God. He never seems to visualize a Reality to which the modes of being we are accustomed to are merely analogical. He rightly points out the contradictions to which Anselm's ontological argument gives rise if the perfections therein posited of God are taken as merely human attributes. But did Anselm intend them to be taken in this way?

Mr. Fales comes very close to subjective idealism. Towards the end of the book we are startled by echoes from Fichte and Schelling and even Plotinus. "Man takes his world, not for a *fait accompli*, but for a task." In a way, the world is our own arrangement. "What (man) actually does is to *copy*" (the italics are mine) "the organization which manifests itself in his ultimate duties and beliefs. . . . He is able to create because he is a creature. . . . He creates the idea of a world which is the virtual scene for the accomplishments of his final ends."

I. M. HUBBARD.

Essays in Science and Philosophy. By ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947. Pp. 348. Price $4.75).

This book consists of a selection of lectures, addresses, and essays given and written at different periods in the long career of a distinguished mathematician and philosopher. Some of the lectures and papers have previously appeared in either English or American journals, and the two well-known lectures "Immortality" and "Mathematics and the Good," contained in *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead*, "Library of Living Philosophers" (published by Northwestern University Press, 1941) have been reprinted. The book is divided into four sections, Part I is entitled "Personal," Part II "Philosophy," Part III, "Education," Part IV "Science."

The book opens with his charming "Autobiographical Notes,"[1] followed by a delicious chapter on "Memories," disclosing the naïve impressions made upon a small boy's mind by the events and persons in his environment, with delightful sketches of the characters of some of the folk in his father's parish sixty years ago, and of visitors to the vicarage.

Part II, the section dealing with Philosophy, contains, among other chapters, a lecture entitled "Immortality," originally delivered in April 1941 as the Ingersoll Lecture at the Harvard Divinity School, an essay on "Mathematics and the Good" and another on "The Analysis of Meaning."

The discussion of the subject of "immortality" is based upon the presupposition that all entities or factors in the universe are essentially relevant to each other's existence. The view put forward is that there is an eternal aspect of the universe which is related to the temporal aspect, and that the temporal aspect impresses itself upon the eternal.

The two sides of the universe, Whitehead calls "The Two Worlds." Each world considered by itself is an abstraction, since the concrete universe requires both worlds. Consequently an adequate description of one World includes characterizations derived from the other. The two worlds are called respectively "The World of Activity" and "The World of Value."

The World which emphasizes the multiplicity of mortal things is "The World of Activity." This is the World of origination, of creation. The "World of Activity" needs the other World to give it meaning. This other World is

[1] See the review of *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead*, PHILOSOPHY, Vol. XVII, No. 67.

the "World of Value." This World emphasizes Persistence. Value is in its nature timeless and immortal, and a finite, mortal thing is only valuable because it participates in the immortality of some value whose essence is eternal.

When we turn our attention to the "World of Value" we find that this World, in its turn, needs the other world of Origination and Creation, and for this reason. The notion of "effectiveness" cannot be divorced from the concept of value, and value only has effectiveness in its commerce with the active side of the universe. Cut off from its relation to the "World of Activity," the "World of Value" is a realm of abstract entities performing no function. It is saved from this futility of abstraction by its impact upon the process of Creation. The World of Activity aims at value, and the World of Value satisfies its aspirations.

The question now raised is whether temporal fact, by realizing value which in its essence is timeless, acquires thereby the "immortality" of value? The topic of the immortality of man is a side issue of the wider topic of the immortality of realized value. Whitehead's view is that the understanding of the universe requires that the World of Activity and the World of Value should each exhibit the impress of the other. This leads him to say that the realization of value in the World of Change should find a counterpart in the World of Value. Such a view means nothing less than that temporal personality in the World of Activity involves immortal personality in the World of Value.

It is natural for us to ask what is the evidence for such a belief. Whitehead is unable to enlighten us very much in this matter. The only answer he can give is "the reaction of our own nature to the general aspect of life in the Universe." He is dissatisfied with traditional philosophic thought which presupposes *independent* existences, and the possibility of an adequate description of a finite fact. He considers that this claim of "exactness" is a fake. I think we are meant to draw the inference that a finite being needs for its adequate understanding the World of Value as well as the World of Activity, and that in some way or other not clear to us, it shares the immortality of the former.

The next topic discussed is the connection between modern mathematics and the notion of the Good. Can mathematics elucidate this notion? In the first place Whitehead asserts that no finite entity enjoys self-sufficiency: it cannot be divorced from its relation to the unbounded universe, and its very meaning is derived from its relevance to this infinite background. In the second place, it is pointed out that "Pattern" is a partial disclosure of reality with an essential reference to this infinite background. In the third place, it is maintained that all value is the gift of finitude (since the infinite has no properties) and that value is the necessary condition of activity. Seeing that activity means the origination of patterns of assemblage, and that mathematics is the study of pattern, it will be seen why mathematics is claimed to be related to the study of the good and the study of the bad.

It is generally admitted that "pattern" is important for civilization. For example, every art is founded on the study of pattern. But social systems involve the maintenance of patterns of behaviour, and advances in civilization depend upon the fortunate modification of such behaviour patterns. Thus, says Whitehead, "the infusion of pattern into natural occurrences, and the stability of such patterns, and the modification of such patterns, is the necessary realization of The Good" (p. 109). But it is emphasized that the notion of pattern is meaningless except as a reference to the background of feeling, within which the pattern arises. A pattern can only exist in virtue of its doom of realization, and this "doom" "consigns the pattern to play its part in an

uprush of feeling which is the awakening of infinitude to finite activity" (p. 111). Such, we are told, is the nature of existence: it is the acquisition of pattern by feeling.

The relevance of mathematics in respect of the notion of The Good comes then to this. In the experience of Good or Evil, pattern plays a part in the unit of feeling which includes the enjoyment of the pattern. Mathematics is the study of the pattern in abstraction from the particulars which are patterned.

In the chapter on *Process and Reality* (pp. 114–19), the author reveals the secret that led him to write the book. It was that Philosophers had taken too easily the notion of "perishing." Being and Becoming had received voluminous attention, but "perishing" had been covered up as a sort of scandal. He remarks that almost the whole of *Process and Reality* can be read as an attempt to analyse perishing. "The notion of prehension of the past means that the past is an element that perishes, and thereby remains an element in the state beyond, and thus is objectified" (p. 117). If we get an adequate notion of what is meant by perishing, we have accomplished an apprehension of the meaning of memory and causation. And the meaning is this—because things perish, they are immortal.

Whitehead here re-iterates his views on permanence and transience. He thinks that the universe has a side which is mental and permanent. This side is what elsewhere he has called "the primordial nature of God." It is a non-temporal but actual *nisus*. This permanent actuality passes into and is immanent in the transient side. The permanent side is the appetitive vision of all possibilities of order, "possibilities at once incompatible and unlimited with a fecundity beyond imagination" (p. 118). Finite transience stages this welter of possibilities, according to their relevance, in a flux of epochs. Our epoch illustrates one special type of order, which will pass into another type of which we have not the faintest notion. Then our present theories of order, if remembered, will be regarded as trivialities, "gradually fading into nothingness" (p. 119).

There is an interesting discussion on the *Analysis of Meaning* (122). John Dewey had asked Whitehead to decide between the "genetic-functional" interpretation of first principles and the "mathematical-formal" interpretation. Whitehead declines to make this decision, because the present problem is the fusion of two interpretations. The historic process of the world requires the genetic-functional interpretation, which in its turn requires for its understanding an insight into those ultimate principles of existence which express the necessary connections within the flux (p. 123).

In this discussion Whitehead is concerned to emphasize the fusion of necessity and accident in our observation of Nature. Owing to the vagueness of our insight, our metaphysical notions are only an approximation. They represent such disengagement of necessity from accident as we are able to attain. Our knowledge is always haunted by alternatives. But necessity permits no alternative.

The source of our vagueness is deficiency of language. We can discern the variations of meaning of a word, although we cannot verbalize them in a decisive manner, and are thus misled in our thought by the deceptive identity of the repeated word. The method of algebra embodies the greatest discovery for the partial remedy of defective language. But even this method leaves us with the infusion of necessity with accident, since the principles of algebraic symbolism express the concurrence of mathematical formal principles with accidental factors.

Whitehead informs us that, in the algebraic method, the basic *connectives*

are the relevant mathematical formal principles. The real variables are the unspecified accidental factors. But, it is to be noted, the connection of the accidents is not a mere mathematical-formal principle. It is the concrete accidental fact of those accidents as thus connected. Hence we have a suffusion of the connectives by the things connected. This suffusion is the most general expression of the genetic-functional character of the universe. It is this suffusion of mathematical-formal principles with accidental factors which is responsible for the vagueness of our metaphysical insight. "To hold necessity apart from accident, and to hold form apart from process, is an ideal of the understanding. The approximation to this ideal is the romantic history of the development of human intelligence" (p. 131).

The chapter on "Uniformity and Contingency" first appeared in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 23, 1922–23. It deals with the general problem as to whether, on the ground of experience, it is possible to deduce any systematic uniformity in nature in respect of types of entities or throughout the relations between them.

The argument proceeds as follows. We are aware of a dominant space-time continuum, and reality consists of the sense-objects, such as colours, shades, sounds, smells, touches, bodily-feelings "projected" into that continuum. But "projection" implies a sensorium which is the origin of projection. This sensorium is within our bodies, and each sense-object can be described as located in any region of space-time—say in any "event," by reference to a simultaneous location of a bodily sensorium. The process of projection consists in our awareness of an irreducible many-termed relation between the sense-object in question, the bodily sensorium, and the space-time continuum. We are also aware of the continuum as stratified in layers of simultaneity whose temporal thickness depends on the specious present. This awareness of the "ingression" of sense-objects amidst the events of a dominant space-time continuum, constitutes our apprehension of nature. Because any *part* of the scheme of relations determines the scheme as a *whole*, the scheme must have a systematic uniformity.

Whitehead next deals with Hume's contention that we have no arguments to convince us that objects, which have in our experience frequently been conjoined, will likewise in other instances be conjoined in the same manner; and that our inference that such objects will be conjoined, rests upon nothing but custom. He says that clearly "the key to the mystery is not to be found in the accumulation of instances, but in the intrinsic character of each instance." This overlooked character of the single instance must be its significance of something other than itself. Now every sentient being passes from awareness of sense-objects to the *perceptual* object indicated by that instance. How do we pass from the ingression of sense-objects to perceptual objects? Whitehead's answer is that the ingression of sense-object *signifies* the perceptual object, and a perceptual object is a true Aristotelian adjective of some event which is its situation. The relation of the sense-object to its situation is entirely different from that of a perceptual object. The sense object is derived from its ingression into nature, which is an irreducible many-termed relation. But a perceptual object is not describable as a many-termed relation. Perceptual objects such as houses, trees, stones, etc., are really the "controls" of ingression. As Aristotelian adjectives, they are free from the reign of relativity, since they are just adjectives of the events which they qualify and no others. Thus perceptual objects are sharply distinguished from sense-objects, whose ingression involves all sorts of events, in all sorts of ways.

But if the very nature of perceptual objects is to be "controls," have we not in them the missing character whose supposed absence led Hume to remove

causation from nature into mind? In modern scientific language, a perceptual object means a present focus and a field of force streaming out into the future. The present focus is the perceptual object in its relation to the future.

This discussion on "sense objects" and "perceptual objects" leads on naturally to the problem of induction. Since there are a finite number of perceptual objects within a region of space-time, and this finiteness still remains as we pass from our vague experience of perceptual objects to the more precise scientific objects, such as electrons and protons, valid induction is possible. As Mr. J. M. Keynes says in Chapter XXII of his *Treatise on Probability*: "if the premises of an argument permit us to assume that the facts or propositions, with which an argument is concerned, belong to a finite system, then probable knowledge can be validly obtained by means of an inductive argument."

Part III consists of various lectures and addresses on Education. One on "The Study of the Past—its Uses and its Dangers" was printed in the *Harvard Business Review* for July 1933. Another, "Education and Self-Education," was delivered on Founders Day, February 1st, 1919, to the Stanley Technical School and Coventry & Son, Ltd. An address entitled "Mathematics and Liberal Education" was printed in the *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Mathematics for the South-Eastern Part of England*, Vol. I, No. 1 (1912). Finally, a lecture on "Historical Changes," given to the Radcliffe College Alumnæ Association, appeared in *Radcliffe Quarterly*, January 1930. All these addresses disclose the author's penetrating grasp of principles and his wide knowledge of the great movements in world history.

The final section of the book, Part IV, dealing with Science, is for the most part technical. There is a chapter on "The First Physical Synthesis," dealing with that great epoch in the development of science of about one hundred years, whose centre was 1642, the year in which occurred the death of Galileo and the birth of Newton. This is followed by chapters on "Axioms of Geometry," "Mathematics," Non-Euclidean Geometry," reprinted from the 11th issue of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Then there is a paper on "Indication, Classes, Number, Validation," which appeared in *Mind*, 1934. The final chapter of this section is on "Einstein's Theory," which appeared in *The Times Education Supplement*, February 12th, 1920. The purpose of the original article was to suggest an alternative explanation of Einstein's great achievement.

The book is attractively produced and there is an adequate index.

SYDNEY E. HOOPER.

Books also received:

L. CRANMER-BYNG, F.R.S.A. *The Vision of Asia* (An Interpretation of Chinese Art and Culture). With a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler, M.P. London: John Murray. Pocket Edition, 1947. Pp. xiv + 306. 6s. net.

A. H. ARMSTRONG. *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*. London: Methuen & Co. 1947. Pp. xvi + 241. 15s. net.

FUNG YU-LAN, Ph.D. *The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy*. Translated and Edited with an Introduction by E. R. Hughes, M.A., Reader in Chinese Philosophy, Oxford University. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. 1947. Pp. xiv + 224. 15s. net.

SIDNEY SPENCER, B.A. *Shall We Follow Karl Barth?* London: The Lindsey Press. 1947. Pp. 59. 1s. 6d. net.

E. G. Rupp. *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition.* Cambridge University Press. 1947. Pp. 220. 8s. 6d. net.

George Seaver. *Albert Schweitzer The Man and His Mind.* London: Messrs. A. & C. Black, Ltd. 1947. Pp. viii + 346. 18s. net.

Kurt Lachmann. *The Renaissance of the Individual.* London: Charles Skilton, Ltd. 1947. Pp. xvi + 143. 7s. 6d. net.

Dagobert D. Runes (Ed.). *The Selected Writings of Benjamin Rush.* New York: Philosophical Library, Inc. 1947. Pp. xii + 433. 5 dollars.

Maurice J. Shore: *Soviet Education in Psychology and Philosophy.* New York: Philosophical Library, Inc. 1947. Pp. xxii + 346. 4 dollars 75 cents.

Herbert Dingle. *The Missing Factor in Science.* (Inaugural Lecture as Professor of History and Philosophy of Science, University College, London.) London: H. K. Lewis & Co., Ltd. 1947. Pp. 18. 2s.

Norman H. Baynes. *The Thought-World of East Rome.* A Lecture delivered in Westfield College on October 15, 1946. London, New York, Toronto: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1947. Pp. 45. 2s. 6d. net.

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INSTITUTE NOTES

A Meeting to celebrate the gracious according of the title "Royal" to the Institute by H.M. The King, was held at the Royal Society, Burlington House, London, W.1, on Thursday, November 27, 1947, at 5.15 p.m. Addresses were given to a crowded audience by Field-Marshal Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa, Viscount Samuel, President of the Institute, Lord Lindsay of Birker, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and Vice-Chairman of the Institute, Professor C. D. Broad, Knightsbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge, and Professor E. A. Milne, Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics in the University of Oxford. Messages of goodwill were read from H.M. The King, Signor Benedetto Croce, the distinguished Italian thinker, M. Jacques Maritain, French Ambassador to the Vatican, and Professor Niels Bohr, President of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

It is proposed to arrange the letters and addresses in the form of a Brochure, and members will receive a copy in due course.

Members are reminded that the following lectures will be given in the Lent Term at University Hall, 14, Gordon Square, W.C.1, at 5.15 p.m.:

Monday, January 26th.	"Existentialism." Professor H. J. Paton (University of Oxford).
Friday, February 27th.	"The Organic State." G. R. G. Mure, M.A. (Warden of Merton College, Oxford).
Friday, March 12th.	"Truth." Professor A. J. Ayer (University of London).
Friday, April 16th.	"Philosophy and Personal Commitment." Professor J. W. Harvey (University of Leeds).

There will also be two Evening Meetings at the Eugenics Theatre, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1, at 7.30 p.m.:

(1) Friday, February 13th.	"The Philosophic Basis of Modern Physics." Dr. Robert Eisler.
(2) Wednesday, March 3rd.	"Philosophy and Religion." John Hartland-Swann, Ph.D.

SPECIAL NOTICE REGARDING A NEW CLASS OF MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE, CALLED "ASSOCIATES"

In order that the Institute's Journal, PHILOSOPHY, shall be easily available, at a nominal cost, to students at the various Universities, the Council has decided that there shall be a new Class of Associate Members. Students at any institution or organisation for higher education are eligible for admission to the rank of Associates for a period not exceeding three years, at a cost of 8s. 6d. per annum. Associate membership carries with it all the privileges of membership except that of taking part in the government of the Institute.

Trinity College

PERROTT STUDENTSHIP

in

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

The Electors to the Perrott Studentship are prepared to receive applications from candidates.

Psychical Research is defined, for the purpose of the Studentship, as "the investigation of mental or physical phenomena which seem *prima facie* to suggest (*a*) the existence of supernormal powers of cognition or action in human beings in their present life, or (*b*) the persistence of the human mind after bodily death."

The Studentship is open to any person who shall have completed his or her twenty-first year at the time when the election takes place. A Student may be re-elected once, but not more than once.

The Studentship is tenable for one year, and the Student will be required to devote a substantial part of the period of his tenure to investigating some problem in Psychical Research. The Student shall not, during the tenure of his studentship, engage in any other occupation to such an extent as would in the opinion of the Electors interfere with his course of research.

The Studentship will be of such value, not exceeding £300, as the Electors may award after considering the nature of the research which the candidate proposes to undertake. The emolument will, in general, be paid half-yearly, and the first instalment will be paid on the quarter-day on which the tenure of the Studentship begins.

The Student shall, during the tenure of his Studentship, pursue to the satisfaction of the Electors the course of research proposed by him in his application; provided that such course may be altered with the consent of the Electors. The Electors will appoint a Supervisor with whom the Student is to keep in regular touch. If the Electors shall report to the Council of Trinity College, Cambridge, that the Student is failing to pursue his course of research with due diligence, the Council may, if they think fit, deprive him of his Studentship.

Applications from candidates should be sent to Professor C. D. Broad, Trinity College, Cambridge, before May 3, 1948. In making his application a candidate should state his qualifications and claims, and his proposed course of research; he may also submit any work which he has written, published or unpublished. No testimonials are required from candidates who are graduates of Cambridge University or women students on whom a title of a degree has been conferred by that University. Other candidates must submit the names of three referees, and the Electors will not award the Studentship to any such candidate until they have had a personal interview with him.

The election to the Studentship will take place in the Easter Term of 1948, and, if a candidate be elected, his tenure will begin at Michaelmas following the election.

October 31, 1947.

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THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

APPEAL FOR NEW MEMBERS AND DONATIONS

The Council appeals to members to do all in their power to introduce new members in order to extend the benefits of the Institute and to increase its revenue.

The Institute has no endowments, and its work, which includes lecture courses and meetings for discussion in the various Centres, as well as the conduct of the Journal, cannot be carried on from revenue derived solely from annual subscriptions. The Council, therefore, appeals for donations, small or large, from sympathizers with the Institute's aims.

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